

THE WINGLESS HOUR

The Wingless Hour

By
RICHARD J. COOKE



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To the Gentle Reader:

IN classic days Time was painted or sculptured as full-winged. *Tempus fugit* is a quotation in every tongue. But Chronos is not always in the air. During the day while absorbed in work we take no note of the flight of time. The busy hours, like flying birds, pass over our heads, and we observe them not. They are Wingéd Hours.

But when the day's work is done and one is away from home and alone, the hours drag heavily; not with light wing do they come or go, but with feet of lead. These are the Wingless Hours.

Idle moments, however, need not, like mountain streams, go to waste. Many a wheel may be turned by waters that aimlessly flow. Spare moments contribute largely to the world's wealth, and

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the quiet hour may become the golden opportunity for highest intellectual or spiritual enjoyment and profit—quiet moments when the soul shut in from the sights and sounds of the garish day may strengthen its waning powers in meditation, or hold high converse with the real kings of men, and find itself “never so little alone as when alone.”

Possibly, you have often wished for a little book which you could dip into anywhere to beguile an idle hour, and for you and for all other thoughtful souls who amid the carking cares of life yet live in the world of the spirit, these few pages—by-products of spare moments—are written, to warn, strengthen, sweeten and console. They are not sermons, they are really not essays, they are simply the collected dreamings of the Wingless Hour.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "R. J. Cooke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

THE LEAKAGE OF POWER

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And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him.—*Judges 16 : 20.*

IT went gradually. As the light dies upon the hills, as a gorgeous sunset fades into colorless glow, and evening slowly sinks into loneliness and night—so went the Spirit of God. Samson did not know it was gone. He was asleep. But back of the sleep, the sleep of death in the lap of Delilah, were days of dallying with sin, of playing with it, seeking it, indulging in it, and all those days led up to the fatal hour when, like an Emperor bartering an Empire for a bauble, he abandoned himself to the power of sin and lost the power of God. Shorn locks—shorn strength! Forgetting the stars, he sank in the mire.

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Born of godly parents, consecrated to the service of God, destined savior of his country—great things were expected of Samson. But he was a disappointment. Of all disappointments he was the worst. He played the fool. He played it with his eyes wide open. He played it, as many another has played it, against every restraining influence of home and religion and interest and calling. A traitor to himself, he played false to every holy thing. The glamour of life outside his circle, the morally disintegrating power of unholy love, the fascinating charm of novel experiences among strange people, so unlike the quiet simplicity of his Israelitish home, appealed mightily to his imagination, to every vibrant nerve of his lawless being. He gloried in his strength. He ridiculed the dream that he could ever fall a victim to Philistine snares or heathen woman's wiles.

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But do the eyes of the basilisk ever wink? Does the charm of the serpent ever loosen its grip on the quivering bird? Stealthily, but persistently and surely, the filmy tentacles of the octopus, as Victor Hugo pictures for us in "*The Toilers of the Sea*," reach out for the neck and arms of the unthinking fisherman till suddenly the mighty muscles of the frightful thing are wrapped around the shrieking victim as he is dragged down into the oozy depths of ocean, where he is not so much devoured as he is absorbed into the belly of the monster.

Thus was it with the Fool of History. Drawn gradually from his family to a heathen family; from the religion of wholesome living to the debaucheries of aliens, he finally gave away the blessed secret of his strength. Compared to his pleasure, he held this gift of God as of little worth. And here was the depth of his shame, the climax of his perfidy.

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As a traitor he surrendered the keys of the citadel. For the fellowship of God he sought the love of a harlot. He flung away his calling as a Nazarite and devoted himself to lust. Against God and home, church and country, honor and interest—Delilah won. "He told her all his heart and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon my head from my mother's womb; if I be shaven then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak and be like any other man."

Sin did not come to him. He sought it. He put himself in the way of it. He walked in the way to be shorn of his character and his glory, and so by the inevitable working of inflexible law he who was named *Shimshon*, meaning *Sunlight*, ended his days in darkness! "And the Philistines laid hold on him and put out his eyes; and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him in

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fetters of brass, and he did grind in the prison house."

In Gaza! Of all places on earth, Gaza! once the scene of his mightiest triumphs in the days of his strength, now the scene of his deepest degradation! What a tragedy! What infinite irony! He who once tore away the gates of this city and carried them away with a shout to the tops of the hills, now grinds Philistine corn as a slave in its prison. The strength that should have been used in the service of God, being wasted, is now put to the labor of a beast. Too late does Samson realize that he played the fool and in himself received the reward of a fool.

I yielded and unlocked her all my heart,
Who with a grain of manhood well resolved
Might easily have shaken off all her snares;
But foul effeminacy held me yoked
Her bond-slave. O indignity! O blot
To Honor and Religion! Servile mind
Rewarded well with servile punishment!

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'T is a long way from health to disease, from strength and power to leanness and trembling. But the change is not sudden. Health is not lost in a day. In every instance there has been a leakage, a stealthy flow of vigor, scarcely felt at first, perhaps, but which unchecked has gradually increased in volume till now the physical constitution is undermined, the fine bloom has faded from the cheek, and the joy of living is gone.

The saint does not turn sinner in a night. Experience and world-knowledge teaches that one does not forsake in an instant all that love and honor holds dear, the confiding wife with springtime love, the little ones with innocent joys and ringing laughter careless of the day, —friends and social standing and all the reality and richness and repose of a happy home for the embraces of one who at last is nothing but

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A rag and a bone
And a hank of hair,

though her cheeks be painted with the colors of the lily and the rose. No one suddenly flings to the winds the splendid achievements of a lifetime and plunges headlong into knavery and all the sure results of evil-doing.

In many cultured minds the loss of power comes through the gradual loss of faith, however that may have been brought about. Unbelief is a sure leak of all spiritual power. How gradual was the drift of the great skeptic Renan from his simple Christian faith, and religious associations at Tréquier, his birthplace, with its cathedral and cloisters and the picturesque practices of its peasantry! From Tréquier, where he had been under the careful instruction of the pious clergy whom he ever after venerated, he went when sixteen years old to the St. Nicholas Academy in Paris.

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From there he went to the college at Issy to prepare for the renowned St. Sulpice Seminary in Paris. At Issy he continued the drift from his childhood faith which had imperceptibly begun some time before. He expresses his doubts and hesitates to be ordained, though he afterward submits to taking the tonsure. Science becomes his absorbing passion. "The one thing lacking," he says of those days, "was positive science, the idea of a critical search after truth. This superficial humanism [which he had been studying] kept my reasoning powers fallow for three years, while at the same time it wore away the candor of my faith." He begins to deny the possibility of miracle and revelation, and to substitute an ideal system of the universe of his own making for the living God. At St. Sulpice his unbelief deepens. "For four years," he writes in his *"Recollections of My Youth,"*

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“a terrible struggle went on within me, until at last the phrase which I had long put away from me, as a temptation of the devil—‘It is not true’—would not be denied.”

The Roman Church had failed to recognize the demands of science and the advent of a new era in thought. The drift in the case of the young Renan was accelerated. On October 6, 1845, when only twenty-two years old, he left the Seminary of St. Sulpice and abandoned his faith in Christianity. “At evening bell he went down the steps for the last time in his cassock, crossed the square rapidly, and made his way to the neighboring hotel or lodging-house of Mlle. Celeste. The change to lay attire was not at once completed. But in this abrupt fashion the unknown had been faced and Renan had flung himself upon the pavement of Paris.” On June 23, 1863, eighteen years later, he pub-

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lished his "*Life of Jesus*," one of the most pernicious books that ever was written. But when in the Church of St. Sulpice some years ago, to see where Renan once worshiped and to look at some old pictures there, I saw Christ still honored as God, and the little children playing in the square to the music of the spurting fountains and take their turns to run in and repeat their catechism just the same as if the *Vié de Jésus* had never been written.

From the time that David F. Strauss submitted to the influence of such Rationalists as Professors Semler and Paulus till he produced his unhistorical "*Life of Jesus*" which reduced the Gospel narratives to myths, and by its boldness shocked the religious sense of the nineteenth century, we can trace the gradual descent of his belief until at last, losing all faith in a personal God, he passed away in the shadows of death,

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leaving a sad memory to his only daughter. He was only twenty-eight when his destructive book appeared "A young man full of candor, of sweetness and modesty; of a spirit almost mystical and apparently saddened by the disturbance which he had occasioned." But he died without sweetness and without hope of this world or of life in the next.

And in the world of letters, how clearly is seen the downward slope of the soul from the sunny heights of prayer and serene faith to the darkness of unbelief in the life history of George Eliot! Like Herbert Spencer, the great philosopher and her friend, she came of, or was related to, good Methodist stock. Her mother, like Spencer's mother, was a Methodist, and beautiful Dinah Morris in "Adam Bede" was George Eliot's aunt. George Eliot herself in early life was deeply pious. At nineteen she writes:

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“May the Lord give me such an insight into what is truly good that I may not rest contented with making Christianity a mere addendum to my pursuits or with tacking it as a fringe to my garments. May I seek to be sanctified wholly.”

Then she was a happy girl in her country home, helping her father make butter and cheese, studying Italian and German and French, and enjoying the same spiritual life as her relatives. Later, led astray by an infidel book on the “*Origin of Christianity*,” which was placed in her hands, she gradually drifted from the faith of her childhood. She refuses to go to church, becomes alienated from her father, seeks anti-Christian society, becomes the translator of Feuerbach and Strauss, mixes with Agnostics, marries a man who had already a wife and children living, and finally died without God or hope of im-

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mortality, and leaving to us the regret that such a brilliant light should sputter out in starless night. Do we need to add more names in the literary or philosophical world to show the downward trend of the soul that abandons the Gospel of Right-doing, Mary Woolstonecroft, Shelley, James Mill, the father of John Stuart Mill, Harriet Martineau, for example?

These are typical instances of the loss of spiritual power in matters of faith. How is it in the personal life? Its history is clear. The leakage of power is gradual. First the unholy thought is held for an instant, then dismissed. It returns and is entertained. There is a feeling that it can be shaken off at any time. One is astonished, affronted, deeply insulted at the idea that he could be so easily, or, indeed, ever be under any circumstance swerved from his integrity. "Is thy servant a dog that he

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should do this thing?" But the eyes of the serpent glitter. The poison works. The novelty fascinates. The victim plays with it and halfway delights in it. The brain-cells grow accustomed to the new thrill, and the thrill comes oftener and stronger. The soul now quarrels with itself. The super-man protests against the lower-man, and for a time the upper-man beats down the animal. But there is a rebound, a faint quiver of hesitancy, and—as at length the needle gradually yields to the relentless pull of the magnet—the infatuated soul finally surrenders to its Delilah.

Vice is a monster of such frightful mien
As, to be dreaded, needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Lucifer, Son of the Morning, who
has been falling from Heaven all day,
from rosy morn till dewy eve, strikes the

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earth at last. The electric fluid has leaked away on inducting pipes, or old iron, and the lights are all out!

To what darkling worlds of duplicity and falsehood does this falling away from God and home lead the unhappy victim! For reality which was his he enters a world of shadows where the light is as darkness. His personality is changed. Changed himself, all else is changed. Donatello in the "*Marble Faun*," once in harmony with Nature, comes to the fountain to wash his guilty hands, but all Nature shuns him; the birds, the rabbits, the squirrels, they all flee from him. Severed from the life and gladness of God no one is ever the same again. There is opened a wide gulf between the backslider and the reality that was his. He lives in the shadow land, where the sunshine never sleeps on mossy banks, nor moonbeams frolic with the fire-flies. Home is not

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the same any more, nor the laughter of children. Distant, or fearful, is his meeting with old friends of the Sanctuary. He is so changed that he is a stranger in a strange land when he enters the House of God. The meaning of the Gospel message awakens no response as in former days; it is a remote, a far-away, fading reminiscence. Hollow is the sound of sacred song and the voices of prayer, which like incense rise fragrant and sweet in the world of the spirit. Like Göthe's "Faust" listening with dead heart to the bells of Easter Morn, he may well say,

Ye heavenly tones, with soft enchanting

.

Your message well I hear, but faith to me
is wanting.

By degrees the Spirit left him. He knows not the moment when God forsook him, forsook his soul, and left him

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sign on the door—HERE ONCE GOD DWELT.

Deny it, or ignore it as we may, there is a Nemesis which camps on the trail of every violator of moral law. This is the universal experience of the race from the beginning. It is the clear-sounding note in Greek tragedy, in Hebrew teaching, in Roman poetry, in the stories of the early morning of Time which were old stories when Egypt and Babylon were laying the foundations of empire. Sin is its own avenger. The wages of sin is death. Like a poisonous microbe in the blood, spreading disease through the whole body, "Sin," says St. James, "when it is full grown bringeth forth death."

Not since the world began did any one fall over that precipice of deadly sin who did not play on the edge of it. When one determines to sin, God lets him sin. From the pinnacle of the

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Temple, fascinated by the lure of the world, *he flings himself down*. Out of the imagination comes the wish, and out of the wish springs the act. Once he was in Eden and walked with God. He was warned of evil powers,

heard born on the wind the articulate
voice

Of God, and Angels to *his* sight appeared
Crowning the glorious hills of Paradise.

But to what end, when he listens to the low whispering of the tempter in the rustling of the leaves and deliberately falls, in spite of all warning!

The first beginning of the leakage of power is when one ceases to pray. No one who prays ever departs from God, nor God from him. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up on wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Prayer is the link which binds us to God.

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Along the conducting line of prayer flows the life and the power of God. It is the fountain where we wash and are clean; the open door through which we look up to far-away heights of spiritual attainment, or behold the nearness of heaven and the ministering hosts of Mahanaim. In prayer we touch everlasting reality and know ourselves immortal. There, peace is ours, inward peace, flowing like a river full tide through all the areas of sense giving life and vigor to the soul. Prayer is the Power-house of God. No prayer, no power. When prayer is neglected, all evil is at the door. Sin crouches there. The soul is imprisoned in its own self, now a dungeon, and at the door sits Sin, like Milton's Death at the gates of Hell. Between the soul and God, the source of its life and power, the link is broken, the wires are down, the power is shut off, the lights

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are all out! One more tragedy is added to life's sad record. Another promising life has gone to pieces like a ship on the rocks, and he who has forsaken his God awakes at last to realize the value of a reputation only when it is lost!

How different the man who feels the pull of the Heavens and yields to it. He does n't know how gloriously strong he is growing. He is not thinking about it. Healthy people are not forever thinking about their health, feeling their pulse, testing their lungs. They live in the open. They are sun-lovers. The God-lover lives in the atmosphere of God. He becomes fitted to his environment, is at home in it and nowhere else. He is gradually changed from strength and glory of spirit to higher efficiencies by the Spirit of all power dwelling in him. He does n't know the process. God keeps some things to Himself. He simply does his duty, the grace of God

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does the rest. But the power is in him. The glory of spiritual beauty is in him and works, in time, from within outwardly, as if it would transform even the material body into its own likeness. It works out through every little nerve, through the eye, the face, the voice, and hand, and bearing of the whole personality. Moses "wist not that his face shone."

Spirit is self-revealing. In his "*Choir Invisible*," James Lane Allen describes for us an old face that was lighted with unseen glory: "For prayers will in time make the human countenance its own divinest altar! Years upon years of fine thought like music shut up within us, will vibrate along the nerves of expression until the lines of the living instrument are drawn into correspondence, and the harmony of visible form matches the unheard harmony of the mind." Thus we become like that we

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love and has strongest sway over our inmost lives.

But there came a change in Samson, and we ask in the face of hard and fast doctrines of Necessity, in the face of some modern theories of the compelling power of Heredity, If a man fall, may he rise again? Is there no return? Is it true that the bird with the broken wing will never climb the heights of air again? Is it true that in the nature of things, in the order and constitution of the universe *Karma* must forever work its awful power, Sin forever mean more sin? It is not true. Are any of us what we once were, innocent children and youth? Has the imagination never been stained? the conscience never outraged? Have we never dropped the penitential tear? Have you never cried to yourself,

“ . . . Ah, for a man to rise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be?”

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Have we not all sinned? and have we
not been born again to newness of life?

I called the boy to my knee one day,
And I said: "You're just past four;
Will you laugh in that same light-hearted way
When you're turned, say, thirty more?"
Then I thought of a past I'd fain erase—
More clouded skies than blue—
And I anxiously peered in his upturned face,
For it seemed to say:
"Did you?"

I touched my lips to his tiny own,
And I said to the boy: "Heigh, ho!
Those lips are as sweet as the hay, new-mown;
Will you keep them always so?"
Then back from those years came a rakish
song—
With a ribald jest or two—
And I gazed at the child who knew no wrong,
And I thought he asked:
"Did you?"

I looked in his eyes, big, brown, and clear,
And I cried: "Oh, boy of mine!
Will you keep them true in the after-year?
Will you leave no heart to pine?"

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Then out of the past came another's eyes—
Sad eyes of tear-dimmed blue—
Did he know they were not his mother's eyes?
For he answered me:
"Did you?"

—*Carl Werner.*

No, it is not true that sin must mean
more sin.

For like a child sent with a fluttering light
To feel his way across a gusty night,
Man walks the world. Again and yet again
The lamp shall be by fits of passion slain;
But shall not He who sent him from the door
Relight the lamp once more, and yet once
more?

We know by personal experience that
there is salvation from sin—from the
love of it, the guilt of it, and the power
of it. Even Prince Hal, Shakespeare's
best-loved character, who forsook the
decencies and honors of his father's
court to revel with brawlers in low tav-
erns, has in him yet tender memories of

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better days, and there does come a time when remorse for his evil ways and shame and for the grief he brought to his royal father's heart suddenly awakens in him a tremendous hunger for clean living and high thinking worthy of a king. There arises in his awakened soul such fierce contempt for his former days that when Falstaff, sin-bitten tempter of his youth, would draw him away again, he turns on him with reproving words:

I know thee not, old man ; fall to thy prayers.
How ill white hairs become a fool and jester !
I long have dreamed of such a kind of man,
So surfeit, swelled, so old, and so profane.
But being awake, I do despise my dream.

.

Reply not to me with a fool-born jest.
Presume not that I am the thing I was ;
For God doth know, so shall the world perceive,
That I have turned away my former self.
So will I those that kept me company.

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And even old Falstaff, the bragging, drunken Falstaff, dies at last murmuring "o' green fields and babbling brooks," as if perhaps (I hope Shakespearian critics will forgive me) he would recall the Twenty-third Psalm. And why not? Did not our Lord after His resurrection, remembering Peter's fall, say, "Go, tell My disciples *and—Peter* that I go before them into Galilee?"

And so Samson's hair grew again, and with its growth came strength. Deep in the dungeon of himself he found God and himself, and triumphed at last over all his enemies. And we shall find him again, find him in an unexpected place and in better company than we ever thought we would. We shall find him mentioned among the heroes of Faith in the Valhalla of Israel. For, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when the writer calls the roll of Israel-

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ish heroes, he says, "Time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak *and Samson*, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, and put to flight the armies of the aliens."

; If a man fall he may rise again. The glory and the gladness of the Universe is Redemption. The leakage of moral character may be stopped. Sin may be blotted out and the haunting memory of it be banished forever. God does forgive, and the proof of it is the Cross. And when God forgives He forgets. "I will blot out your iniquities and remember them against you no more forever." That is final. Like a note of wailing in a penitential Psalm or the sorrowing spirit in the *Inflamata* subdued, rising, falling, and soaring up at last on the wings of faith it breaks out in peans of triumphal joy and deliverance, so the

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repentant soul repudiating the past may rise again to heights of purity and power.

Power? Yes. It was Samson restored who destroyed the temple of Dagon and flung the gods of the Philistines in the dust at last. It is he who knows the personal defilement of sin who can keep others from its foulness. It is he who in agony of soul has walked in the lurid light of Hadean shades where no angel ever plumed his snowy wings, that can lead others to the sweet light of God and the green meadows in the Land of Beulah. Once more for Winter may come Spring and the golden days of Summer! Once more may anthems of praise fill the Cathedral of the Soul as in other days "when prayer was the ecstasy of bliss," and all the sin and shame of life pass forever;

Like a rolled syllable
Of midnight thunder from the coming day.

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There is never a day so dreary
But God can make it bright,
And unto the soul that trusts Him
He giveth songs in the night.
There is never a path so hidden
But God can lead the way,
If we seek for the Spirit's guidance
And patiently wait and pray.

There is never a cross so heavy
But the nail-scarred hands are there,
Outstretched in tender compassion
The burden to help us bear.
There is never a heart so broken
But the loving Lord can heal,
For the heart that was pierced on Calvary
Doth still for His loved ones feel.

There is never a life so darkened,
So hopeless and unblest,
But may be filled with the light of God
And enter His promised rest.
There is never a sin or sorrow,
There is never a care or loss,
But that we may bring to Jesus
And leave at the foot of the cross.

—*Selected.*

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THE FIGHT OF THE SOUL

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee—*Luke 4:14.*

FROM the excitable throngs, with their buzzing curiosity, ferment of ideas and vague expectations, that crowded the banks of the Jordan to hear the Prophet John, Jesus, having received the baptism of the Spirit, quietly withdrew to the solitude of the wilderness to meditate on the ways and means of accomplishing His mission. "And He was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan, and was with the wild beasts." (Mark 1:13.)

Thoughtful days, those in the desert, days fraught with eternal interest for humanity. Task such as was never man's, nor ever could be, was before

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him. He must see that task in all its vastness and vivid detail, must comprehend to its uttermost depths the meaning of his call, isolation of spirit, misconception, persecution, derision, and death. For all this he must make up his mind. Will he do it? Tremendous struggle in the world of the spirit! For what if he were mistaken? Were there not two Messiahs in the Old Testament, one the Suffering Servant of Jehovah, the other the Hero of Israel, the King who subdues all nations? Did not God establish the law, ordain a priesthood? and must he set all this aside and breaking away from the interpretation of ages, and the hopes of political Israel, engage in a life or death struggle with his people and the hierarchy? On the other side there was the broad road to universal conquest, to glory and fame. Which side will he take?

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Alone he enters the desert, alone he enters into communion with his soul. No, not alone. The invisible Power of Evil draws nigh and, using the thoughts that naturally arise in the mind as means of temptation, enters into conflict with the Son of God. Now, or never, will the Kingdom of Moral Chaos in all worlds rise in supreme conquest over the Kingdom of Righteousness and all the plans of God. Now, or never, will Diabolus reign in history and from his throne influence the ages to come. Never was there such a conflict! All that came after was settled there. The shame and suffering, the blasphemy and rejection of later days were there, Gethsemane and Calvary and Olivet, they were all there.

But it was not until Jesus was worn by fastings and long vigils, when the physical man was exhausted, that the Tempter began his attack. By appeal

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to his bodily wants and to all the thoughts and visions of a possible future for humanity that would possess such a majestic mind as Jesus', Satan sought to penetrate into the very depths of his soul and to swerve him from his dependence on God and the path of his calling. Decision once and forever final must be made. Will Jesus make it? Shall his kingdom be a copy of world-kingsdoms, surpassing them in earthly splendor and glory plus justice and universal brotherhood, founded on philosophical or political principles? That is for him to decide. He can of course adopt the Messianic dream of his people and start the flames of a holy war against the hated Roman, arousing all nations, and be carried at last in triumph through blood and fire to the throne of his father David in Jerusalem. On the other hand, it is for him to establish, instead, a Kingdom of the Spirit, a king-

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dom of humility, of purity and holiness. But this shall mean for him the blasting of his people's hopes, their fierce rejection of him, and an ignominious death. This also is for him to decide.

Then again, will he use his powers for his own ends? Will he save his life by miraculous deed rather than as an ordinary man depend upon the providence of God? Will he be forever tempting God to exert *His* power in his interest instead of accepting the conditions of the human life and influencing men, if he can, by the power of truth? That also is for him to decide.

How will he decide? What arguments pro and con jostle each other here! What noxious vapors arise, blinding clear vision! What sophistry! what casuistry! what balancing of probabilities in a universe of infinitely varied possibilities! Why can he not accomplish his mission without suffering?

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Why can he not in the extremity of hunger save his life by turning useless stones into bread? Ah, had he done so we might have had bread, but no Christ. But suppose he should die of starvation in the wilderness, what good will that be to the Kingdom he has come to establish? Surely he will be no less loyal to God should he employ his power in direct need for the interest of God's Kingdom!

Then once more, why could he not usher in the reign of God quicker, and without controversy, by flinging himself down from the dizzy heights of the Temple in the presence of the rulers and the priests and all Jerusalem, thus demonstrating to them beyond quibble of darkest doubt his divine authority and power? What possible harm could come to any purpose of God by a method which saves innocence from death, which does quickly and univer-

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sally what can be accomplished otherwise only through the slow process of preaching. Here is the fight of the soul! One of two paths he must choose. One, the path of self-preservation, of glory and fame. The other, the thorny way, self-abasement, lowly service, suffering, death—the Way of the Cross.

Jesus decided. Instantly he made his choice. No false reasoning, no sophistications of conscience, no fear of death or consequences to himself, could blind his soul to the light. Fall he could, but he would not. Over against the ever-present "*I Can*," stood the everlasting "*I Will Not*." He thrust aside the crown of the world, and took, instead, the crown of thorns!

O Christ—

“Victorious deeds

Flamed in Thy heart, heroic acts—one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;
Men to subdue, and quell, o’er all the earth,

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Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restored;
Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts
And make persuasion do the work of fear."

Never yet was good without conflict with evil. Never yet freedom without struggle. It is a law of life, invincible, omnipresent, and escape from it, in soul or body, there is none. To every soul of us there comes a time when we are driven into the Wilderness to be tempted of the devil, for *there* is our temptation and *there* is our wilderness and *there* is our destiny wherever we face a moral crisis in the soul.

"Temptation in the wilderness!" exclaims Teufelsdröckh. "Have we not all to be tried with such? . . . Name it as we choose: with or without visible devil, whether in the natural desert of rocks and sands or in the populous moral desert of selfishness and baseness,—to

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such temptation are we called. Unhappy if we are not! Unhappy if we are but half-men, in whom that divine hand-writing has never blazed forth, all subduing, in true sun-splendor; but quivers dubiously amid meaner lights; or smolders in dull pain, in darkness, under earthly vapors!"

In the innermost being of him is man's battleground, and the decisive choice of good or evil must be fought out there to ultimate finish. Compromise there can be none, for that itself is defeat. Nor can there be postponement. That too is defeat. The supreme moment is now, and the soul now must fight or die. Only thus can the soul ever come into conscious triumph over evil. Lacking this consciousness, what sense has it other than of flat subjection to evil? By conflict only comes knowledge of power over the things of darkness, gorgons and shapes from the

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abyss, spectres of the cave and dragons of the slime. For unless strength is tested, what clear fact of your strength is known to you? What have you *done*? What enemy have you felled? "Let not him that girdeth on his armor boast himself as he that taketh it off" (1 Kings 20: 21).

One example is better than a thousand precepts. The pitifulest shadow of a man is he who is always saying what he *can* do but never does it; who is forever sharpening the scythe but never cutting the grass, forever tuning the fiddle but never playing the music. I dipped again the other night into Amiel's *Journal*. What insight into philosophies and notions is there! What discriminating criticism! what fine sayings, penetrating to the heart of things! what knowledge, tenderness, beauty on every page! And yet what dreary, desolating indecision! Like low wintry

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clouds, inertness broods over it all! It was always expected by his friends that he would do something really great, but the "something" never happened. "What use," he asks of himself, "have I made of my gifts . . .? Are all the documents I have produced, taken together, my correspondence, these thousands of *Journal* pages, my lectures, my articles, my poems, my notes of different kinds, anything better than withered leaves?" What was the malady which afflicted this fine, sensitive soul, so sad in its self-reproaches? Indecision! Amiel died a possibility, as every one dies who lacks the enthusiasm of doing. The test of skill is result. What the soul can do is known only by performance. "We often know not what we can do," says Thomas á Kempis, "but temptation discovers what we are."

Many a Pharisee is a Pharisee because he never had a paying chance to

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become a Sadducee. It would make a difference in some people's moral world, some slight change in their self-conceit, if they went to bed hungry. It is the easiest thing in the world for stall-fed people of comfort and culture, dwellers in clean streets and luxurious palaces, heedless of the day and careless of the morrow, to tell the ignorant starvelings in filthy slums and sickening wretchedness to be good. Come out from your beautiful homes, from all your rich associations of literature and art, silken refinement and splendid social surroundings; come out from your friends and your clubs, from your banquets and the liquid mazes of your dances, throw aside your soft raiment; come out from your world of light and beauty into this underworld, to these streets, to these infernos filled with raucous voices such as Dante heard in Malebolge—to these dens, to these sickening sights and

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sounds and all the dreary outlook on a world from which God Himself seems to have gone, and then try to be good! Come and live here! Come down here and fight the fight of the soul! Well is it for thee *if it is fought* wherever thou art! "For, what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or, what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

He who is never sorely tempted, because he has already surrendered, knows nothing of victory, of the glorious power of decision against one's self in self-denial. He is a cipher with the rim rubbed out. To him may be applied, as Amiel says, words like those with which Henry IV greeted the slow-moving Crillon, after a great victory had been won: "Go and hang yourself, brave Crillon, we fought at Argues and you were not there." For him there remains, as a worthless thing, the scrap-

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pile of the universe which, also, at bottom, is his choice. For while every soul of us must enter the Wilderness some time or other, there are those who surrender at the first suggestion of evil. Without a struggle they deliver themselves, soul and body, for a mess of pottage. Such are no serious drain on the resources of Diabolus! The grim irony of it, after all, is that Satan possesses nothing, though he makes them think he does, and from him they get nothing that is not of their own making. They are the veriest victims of illusion. Satan is the cosmic bankrupt. Stripped of all but the power of suggestion, he is Lord only of Emptiness, master of nothing, not even of dismalest Hell which envelops him wherever he is, for the evil which flows from him revolves upon him as a whirlpool upon itself, and holds him in its grip. False promises are his resources, lies and phantoms of the brain

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conjured up in unsettled minds, by means of which, himself without the power to destroy, he persuades his victims to destroy themselves. Sin is the suicide of the soul.

Into the wilderness each one goes alone. As both Pascal and Newman say, "We live alone and we die alone." *Nous mourrons seuls*. We must fight alone. There are no substitutes in this war. The rewards of victory, character, spiritual power, fellowship with God and the Warrior King Christ Jesus, which means supremacy over all powers of darkness and the fear of death, are for each, and the battle is for each. Alone, Jacob struggles with the Unknown in the darkness till the breaking of the day. Alone, Peter denied his Lord, though surrounded by a motley crowd; and though he is flung to the ground by the buffeting of Satan, yet alone he goes out into the night and

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fight it all out again till tears of repentance proclaimed him such victor that in days to come he will die for I him he once denied.

And the reason why we must do battle alone is, because no one can give his personality to another. He can not enter into the depths of another's innermost being, where the man himself lives with all his thoughts and feelings and dreamings and visions, perhaps, of God and man and views of the smaller world outside of him. Another can not enter *there* and give him his belief or unbelief, his virtue or his sin. No two live in the same world. Though under the same roof they may be as far apart as the stars. We live alone, and the battle of the soul must be fought alone.

Doubts, and social conditions, and personal failures confront us, and they are mighty to stand up against. But the severest battle is not with doubts, re-

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ligious or other, for while one may suffer intellectual conflict, still his heart may, for all that, beat true to that which is honest and clean. It is a long way from Doubt to Denial, though both live on the same road. Some men have doubts, others think they have, but they are really nothing more than mental exhalations befogging common sense. The large majority of doubts have their origin not in plainly visible contradictions in the moral or physical universe, but in the ignorance of the doubter. Suppose our knowledge were perfect, or suppose our knowledge of nature and of God was as superior to our present highest knowledge as this is to the knowledge and understanding of the lowest savage in Australian Bush who can not count beyond the fingers on one hand, how many insuperable doubts would remain to worry the candid thinker? Time makes man ashamed of his doubts.

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That all doubts are easily disposed of, however, may be a very blustering conviction of him who is indifferent to either truth or untruth so long as his physical needs are supplied. They may be all moonshine also to him who never knew enough to have a doubt. But however enormous our doubt may be, there was never yet a doubt that behind it there was not a doubt that the doubt was nothing but a doubt; a creepy feeling that when the clouds have rolled away the mountain may be still there! In the *Hibbert Journal* recently (January, 1911) a writer says "even the hard-shelled skeptics are beginning to look wistfully for some spiritual solidarity and long for that peace which they suspect may still be burning quietly like a sanctuary lamp within the hush and dimness of the Church." To-day a black storm-cloud rose with threatening aspect in the sky. It broke in the middle; be-

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tween the two halves there burst through the crimson glory of sunset. Clouds obscure, they also break away.

Worse than mental troubles of this sort, which one may perhaps reason himself out of, or have them knocked out of him by wider knowledge and experience, is the growing consciousness of life's failure to achieve what might have been accomplished under other conditions, or of the utter vanity of self-denial for the attainment of any good. "What's the use?" is the saddest sigh a man ever breathes. Nothing so fatally cuts the nerve of finest endeavor as discouragement. Here is where a losing battle for one's very self is often fought by superior men. Such men are sometimes beaten down by grosser natures, ruthless creatures, Goths and Vandals, who scorn the finer things of life. Sometimes they become the victims of envy and jealousy and smiling treachery

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because of that superiority, which, instead of being an inspiration to others, becomes the very reason why they should be isolated from the pack and devoured. I am reminded here of one of Maxim Gorki's stories. A man caught a vision of better things and endeavored to arouse his fellows to their realization. He argued with them, pleaded with them, showed them the way out of their grossness and ignorance and all the debasement of their sordid surroundings. They laughed at him, and when he persisted they became resentful. Finally, he saw little groups of them whispering to each other. They were debating whether he was a maniac or a nuisance, in either case an individual to be suppressed or confined. The poor man, overwhelmed with his terrible sense of failure, rushes down a street and dashes his brains out against a stone wall at the end of it. Tennyson has sharp

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words for those mediocrities who, being themselves on a low level, would level the mountain to the plain. The mountain is a standing grievance to the plain. Surrounded by stupidity against which, as Schiller in his "*Jungfrau*" tells us, the gods themselves are powerless ("*Mit der Dummheit kämpfen Götter selbst vergebens.*") what encouragement is there for even the strong swimmer to go against the stream? Why not go with the crowd and be popular? Why not be a coward and call it prudence? John the Baptist lost his head for telling the truth; why not keep yours and call it the conservatism of experience?

To look out upon the shell of modern life with its tumultuous energies, its politics, its parliaments and conventions, industries and operations of capital belting the globe, its science and knowledge, its struggle for wealth and power, one

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would hardly think that behind all this ceaseless activity in another world, the invisible world of mind and spirit of which this visible world is the reflection, there was any fierce battle going on at all. Everything seems to exert itself in this. But life's tragedies and life's victories teach us better. The invisible is the real world. *There* is the battleground of the forces. Here we see the results of the invisible conflict, not at all the flash of steel or the deadly thrust. Every heart knows its own bitterness, though it fronts the world with a smiling face. To-day in wealth and honor, sought for and flattered, holding high head among respectabilities; to-morrow stripped of all he bargained his soul for, but clad instead in criminal garb and sitting alone in a felon's cell, is all we see of the man who has gone wrong. But, it is enough. The procession of dead souls, men and women, tells its own

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story. There was a battle—this is the result!

The result, heartening beyond measure, is also seen in the triumphs of those who do not surrender to Diabolus. Not for all the kingdoms of the world will they fall down and worship him. In a moment, like a gleam of lightning across the night, the kindly light of God has flashed in their souls. They see the truth, and worse than death is the love of a lie.

“Oh, we’re sunk enough here. God knows!

But not quite so sunk that moments,
Sure though seldom, are denied us,

When the spirit’s true endowments
Stand out plainly from its false ones,
And apprise it if pursuing

Or the right way or the wrong way,
To its triumph or undoing.

“There are flashes struck from midnights,
There are fire-flames noondays kindle,
Whereby piled-up honors perish,
Whereby swollen ambitions dwindle,

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While just this or that poor impulse,
Which for once had play unstifled,
Seems the sole work of a lifetime
That away the rest have trifled."

—*Browning in "Cristina."*

In "Ned Bratts" also, Browning tells of the struggle for a soul. Mr. John A. Hutton pictures it for us. It is Special Session in Bedford Courthouse. Cases are being disposed of. Prisoners are tried and sent to jail. Pleadings are being heard when suddenly into the midst of judges and lawyers and assembled people Ned Bratts and his wife clinging close to each other break in, and facing the whole court plead in God's name—to be allowed to speak. Their story is staggering. They had just come from Bedford Jail, where they had been imprisoned with John Bunyan. Abandoned criminals from early life, they had blasphemed and scorned the good man's pleadings. But Bunyan had read to them from "the blessed book" of the

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bottomless love and mercy of God, of the pity of Christ for poor sinners, of the infinite joy of forgiveness, of cleansing of soul, and of heaven. They had never heard of it all before, nor had they dreamed that the compassion of God was for such as they. And now they feel that they must go down into the blackness of their sinful lives and bring up into the light of day all the frightful iniquities of the years that God in mercy might destroy those iniquities forever. There they stood, those two, once hardened criminals, now fearlessly yet sorrowfully confessing their sins. Not one foul blot is left hidden, not one crime is forgotten. They tell it all. Each helps the other to remember what might otherwise be forgotten, feeling, as they tell it all, the burden on their souls slipping away from them. The blackness of their night rolls up like a scroll as they repent before God and

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man in the courthouse there. At last the horrible story of sin and crime is finished; and now, their faces wet with tears but illumined with a strange light, they beseech the judges on the bench to condemn them quickly to death. This is the only way they can expiate the past. They are willing to die. They are not afraid of the darkness beyond; they have passed through the darkness here. They are executed, and that speedily. But Ned Bratts and his wife fought for their souls and—won!

In many other places Browning shows us the struggle of the soul, its victory and its defeat, as in "Pippa Passes," "The Ring and the Book," "Soul's Tragedy," and "The Lost Leader."

In Victor Hugo's masterpiece, "Jean Valjean," we also see the sublime majesty of conscience, the struggle of a mighty soul to do right in spite of all that earth or hell can do against him.

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Valjean is an escaped convict. Some years ago he stole two loaves of bread for starving children and was sent to the galleys. There, herding with criminals of basest breed and suffering all the hardships and cruelty of the most savage character, his moral nature becomes so brutalized that almost every feeling of pity or sense of wrong is obliterated in him. The great deeps of his soul, however, are partly broken up by the kindness of the good Bishop who gave him food and shelter when hiding from justice, and after various relapses, the awakened soul of him not yet having recovered its strength, he resolves to tread the white way of integrity and honor. He assumes another name, M. Madeleine. By inventive genius and industry he rises to prominence and importance. His name and his influence become known everywhere to officials and judges and honorable men, and he

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is respected for his sterling character. Factories spring up around him, and happy homes where the workmen live, and prosperous industries which bring comfort and plenty. He grows to wealth and increasing esteem, this M. Madeleine. He becomes Mayor of the town. Life full of satisfaction and distinction stretches out before him. To live thus in quietness and ease, helpful to others and adored by all, is sweet.

But the officers of the law are looking for Valjean, the dangerous criminal and escaped convict from Toulon. Personal enmity adds zest to their zeal. Finally a poor, ignorant wheelwright is picked up in the road for some crime in the neighborhood and is brought by the gendarmes into court as the long-hunted Jean Valjean. Small prospect for the poor wheelwright ever enjoying another hour's freedom! Never again will he wander away from the streets of

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Paris through country lanes and highways, the birds singing to him, talking at him, and expressing their opinion of him in their way, as he goes in search of work. The galleys or the gallows awaits him. M. Madeleine learns that this innocent man is to be tried for his life, perhaps, as the convict Valjean. Then the struggle begins. Valjean enters the wilderness. The past springs up, terrible in its meaning. It comes forth again like a ghost from its grave. He had long hated the name of Valjean. In hours of self-communion he had thought "that the day in which that name should re-appear would see vanish from about him his new life—and who knows, even perhaps, his new soul from within him." What should he do? Should he deliver himself to the police, or let this unfortunate go to the galleys or die, as the case may be? Terrible conflict! He is in torment. His brain

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is in a whirl. The sweat rolled off his forehead. He argued with himself. He expostulated with himself. Why should he throw away the security, the honor and wealth that he had gained? Surely, it was the will of God, that now by the arrest of this unknown man the Valjean of other days should pass out forever and that he, M. the Mayor, should be free from discovery the remainder of his life. Yes, let things take their course; this is wise; this is prudent. It is a little hard, it must be confessed, on the innocent prisoner, but surely *he* is not responsible for the man's plight; *he* did n't accuse him, *he* did n't arrest him. He will therefore destroy all reminders of the past, the Bishop's candlestick, the forty-sou piece stolen from the little Savoyard, and enjoy the freedom and comfort God has given him. He will do all this. But he will not be able to do away with Conscience. Con-

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science is not dead. Louder than the thunders of Sinai the Voice thunders in his soul. What, then, will he do? Denounce himself? Give himself up? Leave this goodly life, this room, these books, these honors, and liberty itself, for the chained-leg, the dungeon, the weariness and wretchedness and all the revolting horrors of the galleys? Dreadful thought? Dreadful alternative, "To remain in Paradise and there become a demon! To re-enter into hell and there become an angel!"

And so the fight of the soul goes on. Now, he is driving the enemy, and again, he is beaten to the ground. At length with a mighty resolve he reaches the town of Arras and enters the room adjoining the court where the prisoner is being tried. The arguments of the prosecutor are going hard against the unfortunate man at the bar. He can not account for himself. Well-known officers

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who were once fellow-convicts in the galleys with Valjean identify him as that dangerous felon now acting a part. The prisoner himself is bewildered, dumfounded, and understands nothing at all of what this is all about, and so can not defend himself. This makes a bad impression on the judges. His own counsel has not been able to do much for him. The prison-doors are gaping for him!

In the room yonder, whose door is shut, another tragedy is going on, a worse one. M. Madeleine is in there, his wilderness, fighting for his soul. For some time he has been there trying to consummate his resolves; but the flesh is weak and he can not make the fatal plunge. "Well! who is there to compel me?" Then he turned quickly, saw before him the door by which he had entered, went to it, opened it, and went out. He ran terror-stricken from the

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conflict, from all the wretchedness that lay beyond. His soul is in agony. Will he surrender? It would be as if a tall tower had crumbled to its base, as if the dome of St. Peter's had fallen, crashing through the roof. He stops, leans against a wall to recover himself. He reflects. "He had reflected all night, he had reflected all day; he had heard but one voice within him, which said, 'Alas!' . . . Finally, he bowed his head, sighed with anguish, let his arms fall, and retraced his steps. . . . He entered the council chamber again. . . . Suddenly, without himself knowing how, he found himself near the door; he seized the knob convulsively; the door opened. He was in the courtroom.

"I am Jean Valjean!"

And with what loyalty to conscience does Scott in the trial of Effie Deans show forth the fight of the soul in sister

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Jeanie's martyrdom for Truth? Arthur Dinsdale in the "Scarlet Letter" is a conquered spirit, beaten and put to flight by the very demons, the demons of fear and shame, which heroic souls who "count not their lives dear unto themselves" scorn to parley with. This is the price of eternal life. "He that seeketh his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." Self-abandonment, self-destruction, then peace—peace rolling in from the Infinite like the waves of the boundless sea. Such is the experience of the twice-born souls who have met Diabolus in the wilderness and laid him. Such was the joy of Caponsacchi in Browning's *"Ring and the Book:"*

"In rushed new things, the old were rapt
away;
Alike abolished—the imprisonment
Of the outside air, the inside weight o' the
world

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That pulled me down. Death meant, to
spurn the ground,
Soar to the sky,—die well and you do that.”

Listen also to Carlyle in “*Sartor Resartus*:” “To me also was given, if not Victory yet the Consciousness of Battle, and the resolve to persevere therein while life or faculty is left. To me also, entangled in the enchanted forests, demon-peopled, doleful of sight and of sound, it was given, after weariest wanderings, to work out my way into the higher sunlit slopes—of that mountain which has no summit, or whose summit is in Heaven only!”

’T is a far cry from Carlyle to St. Augustine, but hear him in his “*Confessions*.” Deploring former days, he cries out to God: “Too late I loved Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee!

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plunging deformed amid those fair forms which Thou hadst made. Thou wert with me, but I was not with Thee. Things held me far from Thee which, unless they were in Thee were not at all. Thou didst call and shout and burst my deafness. Thou didst flash, shine, and scatter my blindness. . . . Thou didst touch me, and I am on fire for Thy peace."

Is all this too violent for modern Christians of the velvet cushion type? Time was when earnest men discounted any pretension to the God-life that was not born of fierce conflict with the powers of darkness. Now, in some quarters, they are tired, or opposed to fighting and to marked conversions. They seek the easier way. Psychology is substituted for Theology and the New Testament. Education and religious practices will do the work that once was done by the aid of the Spirit in the

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fight of the soul. But to all this a Paul and a Wesley, a Jonathan Edwards, a Valjean, or a Mary Voce, in "Adam Bede," who has fought her way through with the prayers of Dinah Morris, would say:

“. . . Call yourselves, if the calling please
you,
Christians—abhor the deist's pravity—
Go on, you shall no more move my gravity
Than, when I see boys ride a cockhorse,
I find it in my heart to embarrass them
By hinting that their stick's a mockhorse
And they really carry what they say carries
them."

Real men who know the world and themselves laugh at the "Ride-a-cock-horse-to-Banbury-Cross" method of redemption.

"A spotless child sleeps on the flowery moss,
'Tis well for him—but when a guilty man,
Envyng such slumber, may desire to put
His guilt away—can he return to rest

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At once by lying there? Our sires knew well
The fitting way for such: dark cells, dim
lamps,
A stony floor one may writhe on like a worm,
No mossy pillow blue with violets."

The sure result of victory in our wilderness is—*power*. "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and there went a fame of Him through all the regions round about." Jacob wins at the brook Jabbok and is no more Jacob, but Israel: "For as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." The forces that would destroy us become the very means by which we gain strength: "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness" (Judges 14: 14). It is the Law of Increase. "To him that hath it shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

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“When the fight begins within himself
A man’s worth something. God stoops o’er
his head,
Satan looks up between his feet—both tug—
He’s left, himself, i’ the middle; the soul
wakes
And grows.”

One mighty, sustained effort of the will shatters all habits. Down deep into the very foundations of vital being goes the imperial mandate of the desperate will that will never surrender. It breaks up the old order. It is a French Revolution, a Reign of Terror, at the center of life, when the old sins that held sway are brought up and guillotined. Win one battle worth while, and the rest becomes easy, for it is a law of our mental and spiritual life that any act voluntarily repeated induces an immediate tendency to its repetition. One set of acts are, thereby, substituted for another. We feel ourselves grow by the

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exercise of our wills. Hence, says he who fought the good fight of faith, "Exercise — gymnasticise — yourselves unto godliness."

Then again, the beauty of it all is, the *sympathy* that is born in us for others by such experiences. It is said of Jesus, "In that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb. 3:18). The best helpers of the poor are the poor. Sympathy makes kin. It begets confidence, and out of that grows courage and all the sweet fruit of helpfulness. But no one can suffer with another who has not himself suffered. It is because the poor *know* poverty that they are the best helpers of the poor. Jerry McAulay down in Water Street could do for the derelicts of New York what all the preachers in Christendom might fail to do. He had been through the wilderness. He knew the shame and the

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foulness of sin, the failures of good resolutions, what it was to be beaten again and again, only to triumph at last. A mighty love is born in the heart for humanity battling with its weaknesses, its inherited burdens, its aggravated sins, its hopes and fears. It is the human touch that touches the human.

He who has suffered will not condemn. We do not know how often, how fiercely, men have resisted and failed. We do not know how often they have triumphed over some throttling evil. What physical or moral impulse was born with them, what limitations shut them in. It is all unknown to us. "Hold your book in the other hand," said a professor to a student who stood up to read. The student went on reading, seemingly giving no heed. "Do you hear me, sir?" The student ceased reading, but holding the book as before. "Sir!" shouted the exasperated

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professor. Then the student, his lips quivering, held up his other arm—a mere stump, from which the hand had been cut away. The class cried out, “Shame! Shame!” But the professor rushed to the boy, and falling down on his knees before him pleaded, “Will you ever be able to forgive me?” *If we only knew!* Little wonder is it that those who have suffered most do most for the rest of us. And he is likest God, likest Him who went up into the wilderness to be tempted, who stretches out the helping hand to discouraged men and women who amid terrible odds are fighting every day like grim death for the integrity of their souls. I know of nothing that can make one feel happier or more boy-like than helping a lame dog over a fence. There is One who does help, One who was Himself tempted, and is able to succor them that are tempted.

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He who did most, shall bear most, the strong-
est shall stand the most weak.

'T is the weakness in strength, that I cry for!
my flesh, that I seek

In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O
Saul, it shall be

A Face like my face that receives thee, a
Man like to me

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever; a
Hand like this hand

Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee!
See the Christ Stand!

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I can not do it alone,
The waves run fast and high,
And the fogs close chill around,
And the light goes out in the sky;
But I know that we two
Shall win in the end—
Jesus and I.

I can not row it myself,
My boat on the raging sea;
But beside me sits Another,
Who pulls or steers with me;
And I know that we two
Shall come safe into port—
His child and He.

Coward and wayward and weak,
I change with the changing sky.
To-day so eager and brave,
To-morrow not caring to try;
But He never gives in,
So we two shall win—
Jesus and I.

Strong and tender and true,
Crucified once for me!
Never will He change I know,
Whatever I may be!
But all He says I must do,
Ever from sin to keep free.
We shall finish our course
And reach home at least—
His child and He.

—*The British Weekly.*

THE LURE OF THE QUIET

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Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place.—*Jer. 9: 2.*

IT must have been an unwelcome change for Jeremiah from his quiet home at Anathoth to the bustling city of Jerusalem and the palace of the king. He was not a stranger to the capital; he well knew its streets and walls and towers, for he had lived all his life within six miles of it. But he was country-bred and was a stranger to the hidden life of the city, which was known only to the politicians and hangers-on at court, who fattened on its vices. He was out of place there, as such men always are, and there was sure to be trouble. Kings' palaces are not good

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for prophets. Some men fit anywhere and at all times. That is their business. It is no inconvenience for them to run with the hare and to play with the hounds. But earnest men who really believe in God are always trouble-makers to wrong-doers.

Around the throne of the Shadow-King who was permitted to rule stood wily counselors, worldly preachers with perennial smiles and deferential spine, false prophets, bolder than their lesser brethren of the willowy back, who prophesied in the name of Jehovah what was needed to strengthen the counsels of lying statesmen. From the courts of the Temple the curling smoke of sacrifice rose regularly. The solemn processions of white-robed priests and chanting Levite, clouds of fragrant incense, the pomp and splendor of ritual, the prayers of thousands of people rising and falling with the fervor of devotion like the

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sounds of many waters,—all seemed to suggest that Jehovah was again the God of Israel. But it was only in seeming. At heart the nation was morally bankrupt, and its doom was approaching like a black whirlwind on the horizon.

At this juncture stood up the prophet Jeremiah. He was a seer who saw the sure results of the workings of eternal law. He was also a poet with a heart as tender as woman's love. But he was no weakling. We think of him as the weeping prophet, soft and lacking in fiber. But that is because of our wrong estimate of character. In spite of his tears and threnodies which sadden us like the low moanings of the sea, he was a born hero. In its darkest hour he never despaired of his country, nor of the ultimate triumph of righteousness.

The religious man is the only true optimist. There are those, of course, who think they are officially appointed

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dispensers of sunshine, but they live in a fool's paradise. Others there are who ignore the real situation, or, they are professionals, hired to laugh, as in the days of our Lord there were those who were hired to weep. They never oppose anything, they smile or look solemn in marvelous wisdom and play their oracular part. But evil is here, nevertheless; and there is no use in blinking at it. "I have investigated the dust heaps of humanity," says Mr. Chesterton, "and found a treasure in all of them." He assumes that all we have to do is to think that the dust heap is a gold mine, and it becomes one. But the City of the Dreadful Night is not the City of God which dazzles us with its glory in the Apocalypse, and no mere thinking will ever make it so. Evil is here. Misery, wretchedness, the lying tongue, moral leprosy, and all the Protean forms of dirty sin which defiles everything it

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touches, are all here doing their sad work. The devil is not dead. Mr. Chesterton in his happy-go-lucky view of the world thinks he is. "At the least," says Mr. Masterman, in pointing out the fallacy of Mr. Chesterton, "at the least, he would design to make the author of evil die of chagrin at persistent neglect, or perish from the repletion of persistent flattery. The scheme is attractive but delusive. That ancient strategist has seen so many Chestertons flare and fade that he is unlikely to be entrapped by such naïve methods."

But Jeremiah knew, as all who believe in God know, that evil has no right to be here, and in the ultimate will not be here. The universe is against it and will yet get good rid of it, and for this reason Jeremiah fought it. We admire the heroism of the Roman who bought at full value the very field on which Hannibal was encamped with his army;

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but during the siege of Jerusalem Jeremiah was so confident that God would deliver his country, though defeated, from the yoke of Babylon, that he purchased a farm near the city from his uncle's son and took wise care to secure the title deeds. When the corrupt Manasseh fell, Jeremiah swept the land in favor of religious reform. When false prophets sought to delude the nation, he denounced them and their political allies at Jerusalem. When conspiracies were hatched against him, he broke through all snares and appealed to the people to mend their ways and avert, if possible, the gathering of "those vultures which smell decaying empires from afar." He was a hero.

But heroes are not gods. They are human, sometimes very human. They are of like passions with ourselves in their weaknesses and failures. Indeed, there are times when the strength of the

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strongest becomes as weak as water. The cedars of Lebanon bend to the storm. The forests of Carmel are shaken with the wind. No one is always at his best. He would not be if he were. Life is a struggle either with itself or with its condition, and from many a brave soul cramped by opposition or poverty, or misfortune, the cry goes up, with the Psalmist, "Thou hast shut me so I can not get out."

To many life consists in being knocked down and picked up again. They seem to be the foot-balls of fate. Then again, the strain of living on high levels seems to be too much for the majority of us. There are select spirits, indeed, who, like eagles, are at home only on the mountain tops. But the most of us live down *here*, and nerves are not steel cables. There is a pace that kills as surely as does the pace downward. We get tired of the fuss

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and feathers, of the dust and heat, the ceaseless toil, the humiliating drudgery of the common round, and in the face of all our endeavors to be philosophical and brave we long to flee away as a bird to the mountains. We want to get away from the crowd, from the jungle cries of struggle in the marts of trade, from the illusions of life, from the impudence of the self-advertiser, those pitiable gluttons of the limelight, and from the newly arrived with their bold aggressiveness and incessant buzzing of "paltry aims that end with self"—from the inartistic materialism of mere shop—we want to get away from it all and rest ourselves in depths of green woods, in quiet noons and musical mornings, far remote from the vulgar glamour and jostle and barbaric tumult of the street! And it is quite natural that we should feel so.

Yesterday Jeremiah fronted the royal

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court at Jerusalem. To the loud pretensions of false prophets he cried out with conscious superiority, "The prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath My word let him preach My word, what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?" But to-day there is reaction. Broken and spent from his fruitless struggle with civic wrong, he longs to break away from it all, from all human relations, from politics and prophesying, from the glitter and splendor of kingly courts, hypocrisies and ritualisms and priestly intrigues—to get away from it all and rest himself in the wilderness, where not a sound of human voice would mar his solitude or remind him of the wrongs and woes of his people. "O, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them!"

And, so it is. Yesterday, we were

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on Carmel, like Elijah, triumphing on the heights of spiritual power, or with unspeakable love gazing on the beauty of the Transfigured Christ, with the disciples on Tabor. To-day, we are with the bats and creeping things of the cave at Horeb, or sighing for a lodge in the far-away desert. The brightness of the morning has faded into the dull red glow of evening. Like a sudden apparition in the dark the seeming unreality of all that we have done, or strive to do, startles us. The wear and tear of many yesterdays cry out in our jaded spirits, we are in the abyss and "All Thy billows have gone over me." Life's problems and our own little affairs grow no less for all our fretting and for all our efforts at world-mending. The birds hop on the leafy branches of the trees along the road as we carry our hopes to the grave and they sing on sweetly just the same. What does the

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storm care for the man in the boat, or for the boat? As Dolly in "Silas Marner" says: "Ah, it's like the night and the morning, and the sleeping and the waking, and the rain and the harvest—one goes and the other comes, and we know nothing how or where. We may strive and scrat and fend, but it's little we can do arter all—the big things come and go wi' no striving o' ourn—they do that they do." Then, our ideals are ever larger than our achievements, and we never get to the top of the hill. In our broken condition, jaded and spent, there is for us no more inspiration, great passion, or entrancing vision of moral beauty. "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest."

Now, is there anything wrong or unworthy in all this? Not if we are human. You are simply tired and in need of repairs—in need of re-charging

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your nerve batteries. You need other skies. Jesus knew the secret of efficiency, and to His disciples He said, "Come ye apart and rest awhile." Nerves are not cables. Every mount of triumph has its valley of humiliation. Was there ever a saint of God from Elijah to the last one yesterday who did not at some time or other lie under a juniper-tree? Jeremiah longed for even a hut in the wilderness, that he might escape the strife of tongues and the chaos around him. John the Baptist becomes a broken victim of doubt when shut in within prison walls from far-circling horizons of the desert and measureless depths of blue in the uttermost sky. Did n't Paul have lurid mornings and distressing weariness betimes? Even Jesus himself had times of depression, immeasurably sad, lonely hours when He sought human sympathy, saying to His friends, "Now is My soul trou-

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bled." Life has its heights and also its depths. One is as useful as the other, and without both there would be neither.

No, the sin of the juniper tree is not in being there, but in staying there. Anybody can be brave when there is no lion in the way, or smile broadly when fortune blossoms. But the test of a man is when he is down. The true man who has in him the stuff that saints are made of, will not stay down; he will rise again, will rise like a rubber ball—the harder it is knocked down the higher it springs.

You are beaten to earth? Well, well, what's that?

Come up with a smiling face.

It's nothing against you to fall down flat,

But to lie there—that's disgrace.

The harder you're thrown, why, the higher
you bounce.

Be proud of your blackened eye!

It is n't the fact that you're licked that counts,

It's how did you fight—and why?

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Heaven has limited respect for him who runs away from the evil around him. His business is to fight it. A man's place is among men. Not in the wilderness, but in the city; not in the cave at Horeb hiding from Jezebel, but on Carmel slaying false prophets; not lost in the crowd, but stalwart in the arena, fighting with beasts at Ephesus. Over against the Lure of the Quiet, is the call of duty in the crowded haunts of men. Into the silence of Horeb comes the voice of God: "Elijah, what are you doing here?"

The value of a man as a social being is his contribution to the happiness of society, his contribution to the solution of the Question before the House. We can not always have things as we would have them. Of course there are Chadbands and Pecksniffs, but are there not also Dinah Morrisses and Cheeryble Brothers? As the author of Festus

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says, "There are thorns and nettles everywhere, but the smooth green grass is more common still, and the blue of heaven is larger than the cloud." And even of the cloud, let us say with Ellen Thornycroft Fowler:

The inner side of every Cloud
Is bright and shining.
I therefore turn my Clouds about
And always wear them inside out,
To show the lining.

A man's place, then, is in the world. Just as you enter the Appian Way after passing the little Chapel of St. Sebastian on the left, beyond the Arch of Constantine, there is a church, a memorial, marking a sacred spot, one of the most sacred in the Eternal City. Around this hallowed ground Legend has woven its beautiful fancy. The story is that during the persecution under Nero, Peter's heart failed him and he deter-

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mined to flee from the city. Having eluded the spies and passed the gates, he was congratulating himself on his escape when, suddenly, on this spot he met Jesus bearing His cross. Astonished at the vision, he cried out, "Lord! where are You going?" (*Domine, quo vadis?*) and Jesus answered, "To Rome, to be crucified again" (*Vado ad Romam iterum crucifigi*). Ah, so it ever is!

I said, "Let me walk in the fields;"
He said, "Nay, walk in the town;"
I said, "There are no flowers there!"
He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the sky is black,
There is nothing but noise and din;"
But He wept as He sent me back—
"There is more," He said, "there is sin."

I said, "But the air is thick,
And fogs are veiling the sun;"
He answered, "Yet hearts are sick,
And souls in the dark undone."

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I said, "I shall miss the light,
And friends will miss me, they say;"
He answered me, "Choose to-night
If I am to miss you, or they."

I pleaded for time to be given;
He said, "Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in heaven
To have followed the steps of your Guide."

I cast one look at the field
Then set my face to the town;
He said: "My child, do you yield?
Will you leave the flowers for the crown?"

Then into His hand went mine,
And into my heart came He.
And I walk in a light divine
The path I had feared to see.

—*George Macdonald.*

But suppose you were in the wilderness,
what would you do with it or in it? We
may escape the vulgarisms and annoy-
ances of the dusty day, the fooleries of
society, and the sordidness of the crowd,
but we can not escape ourselves. Wher-

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ever we go, *we* go. The desert is the last place in the world where we may lose ourselves or find innocence and peace. He who thinks he can escape the evils of his day by flying from them to some imaginary "lodge in some vast wilderness, some boundless contiguity of shade," is like a philosophical Russian who jumped into the sea to escape the storm. There are indeed contemplative spirits who are independent of time and place — rare souls to whom the populous city may be a desert, and the silent wilderness no necessity. John Henry Newman, when once found walking in a quadrangle at Oxford, was asked if he were alone, to which he instantly replied, "Never so little alone as when alone." Cicero had uttered the same thought when musing alone in his Roman villa. But for the average man the worst company he can have is himself. It is not good for man

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to be alone, says Holy Writ, and that 's the end of it. In the picture of St. Anthony in the Desert we see the holy man in his cave reading; but the cave is full of imps, little demons, one climbing on to his rock table, another perched on his shoulder peering into the open book, another looking into his water jar. Ah! these evil thoughts, these longings for sins we dare not or can not commit, they are with us in the wilderness. For, while "the Kingdom of God is within you," so also is the kingdom of evil. No, the way to conquer evil is to face it, just as the way to escape the wrath of God is to fly to God.

The way to Peace is the way of the Cross. Self-crucifixion is world-conquest, and it is he only who has conquered himself who can calmly stand at his post,—he only who has stood the test of defeat and knows the thorny road of grief is the real hero who has the

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respect and the admiration of God.
Neither heaven nor earth has any shoutings or palms for the chronic complainer, not even for him whose strength in the day of adversity is small, but whose laughter is long and loud upon the hills when fortune smiles and the dread of yesterday is no more.

It is easy enough to be pleasant
 When life flows by like a song,
But the man worth while is one who will smile
 When everything goes wrong;
For the test of the heart is trouble,
 And it always comes with the years;
And the smile that is worth the praises of earth
 Is the smile that shines through tears.

It is easy enough to be prudent
 When nothing tempts you to stray;
When without or within no voice of sin
 Is luring your soul away.
But it's only a negative virtue
 Until it is tried by fire,
And the life that is worth the honor of earth
 Is the one that resists desire.

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By the cynic, the sad, the fallen,
Who had no strength for the strife,
The world's highway is cumbered to-day—
They make up the item of life;
But the virtue that conquers passion,
And the sorrow that hides in a smile,
It is these that are worth the homage of earth,
For we find them but once in a while.

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

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And Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had for her.

—*Gen. 29 : 20.*

IN the works of really great writers, such as Scott or Dickens, George Eliot, Tolstoi or Hugo, we come across passages here and there of strange pathetic power, subtle touches of almost super-human genius which reach down to the depths of feeling and open at once the springs of emotion. We know that according to some canons we should not permit such excitation of feeling; but it is altogether useless for any human icicle to tell us that we should suppress such lawless impulses, for it is the business of Genius to see that no appeal to cold Reason shall be stronger than its appeal to the human heart. Since we are in the

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world we are in a way one with the world, flesh of its flesh, bone of its bone. The sorrows and the joys of the men and women who live and act, laugh or weep in the pages before us, weave about us their bewitching spells, and, in spite of all our philosophy or stolidity, as the case may be, we become sympathetic witnesses or partisan actors in what we read. Let us not forget that Kant, the greatest philosopher of Germany and the inaugurator of a new era in philosophy, omitted his daily walk to read "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*;" that Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister of England, read it three times; that Darwin, whom we picture as absorbed only in scientific contemplation of Protozoa and the Anthropoid Ape, immensely enjoyed simple love stories; that the "*Heir of Redclyffe*" brought tears to the eyes of G. J. Romanes, the hard-headed skeptical author of "*A Candid Examination of*

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Theism" and not the least in that brilliant galaxy of scientists in England which adorned the latter part of the Nineteenth Century. If, however, you are incurably insensible to these weaknesses, "and their comforts too," it is not because pachydermatous indifference to the finer feelings is an acquisition to be proud of, or a virtue to be cultivated, but because, probably, as Ben Winthrop says to the parish clerk, "It's your insides as is n't right made for music, it's no better nor a hollow stalk." Feeling is older than thought, and though we may be a very Gradgrind for hard facts, nevertheless stronger than any other passion, Sentiment, at last, rules the world.

It is not an accident that in all the literature of humanity, rich as it is in the poetry of sentiment, there should be no book so full of emotion as the Bible. What wonderfully touching stories from

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Time's early dawn are told to us there of Joseph, and Samuel, and Ruth! And to what glorious heights of sublimity are we carried by the sublimest passages in the Bible, Isaiah XL and LX, and chapters XXXVIII and XXXIX of Job! The most perfect elegy in all literature is David's Lament for Saul and Jonathan (2 Sam. 1: 19-27), and the most transporting expression of triumph is the Song of Deborah in Judges 5: 2-31. But in this Book, so full of History and Poetry and Drama, is there any literary gem more exquisitely lovely in its suggestiveness, more beautiful in its simplicity, than this little story of Jacob's love for his Rachel? The only jewel equal to it—perhaps superior to it, in a way—is the story of the birth of Jesus, as told by Luke. But if that is the Pearl of the New Testament, this is the Kohi-noor of the Old. It is beyond the power of genius to improve

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upon it. "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had for her."

The most beautiful star in the sky is the world we live on, and the dearest spot in the world is the place we call home. It matters not where it is, nor what it is; whether it is a tent under a palm-tree, a mansion in the midst of culture and art, an old house in a smoky town, or a log-cabin on a mountain-side neighboring tall trees and the lonely peaks that parley with the sun—it matters not, for around no other spot do so many tender memories cluster, and to no other place does imagination return as if to a lost Eden to find again the innocence and gladness that were once ours. For, if Paradise, as Augustus Hare wrote, was the home of our first parents, home is the Paradise of their descendants.

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One of the most delightful enjoyments possible in London is visiting the homes where great writers and men of history lived and wrote their works; No. 6 Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, where Goldsmith wrote his "*Vicar of Wakefield*;"—No. 1 Devonshire Terrace, where Dickens wrote his "*Cricket on the Hearth*," "*Barnaby Rudge*," "*The Curiosity Shop*," "*Dombey & Son*;"—Tavistock House, in the square of that name, where he wrote "*The Tale of Two Cities*," "*Little Dorrit*," and portions of "*Bleak House*;"—No. 5 Great Cheyne Row, where Carlyle wrote his "*French Revolution*;"—the homes of George Eliot, Robert Browning, Thackeray, and the large house, now the wing of an Homeopathic hospital, at the corner of Great Ormond Street, near the British Museum, where Macaulay lived, and where he wrote his Essay on Milton. What times the Mac-

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aulay family had in that house! In 1857, long after the great historian had become famous, he writes:

“I sent the carriage home and walked to the Museum; passing through Great Ormond Street, I saw a bill on No. 50. I knocked, was let in, and went over the house with a strange mixture of feelings. It is more than twenty-six years since I was in it. The dining-room and the adjoining room in which I once slept are scarcely changed; the same coloring on the wall, but more dingy. My father’s study much the same; the drawing-rooms too, except the papering; my bedroom just as it was. My mother’s bedroom—I had never been in it since her death. I went away sad.”

Long after Disraeli had become Prime Minister of England he visited his old home in Bloomsbury Square, his personality not being known to the caretaker, where “He sat for some time pon-

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dering and reflecting." Visiting one day the rooms in Kensington Palace where Queen Victoria was born, and where she played with her dolls and toys which are all there yet, an attendant told me that on the occasion of the Queen's last visit there, being too old and feeble to climb the stairs, she had herself carried up in a rolling chair to the room where in the long, long ago she played as a child. Thus does the home hold us to the end!

And yet it is not the house that makes the home, but the presence of *her* whose mother-love, like God's arms, shelters all who are there. Somewhere Ruskin says of the true woman that "There may be no roof above her but the stars; no light to cheer her but the glow of the fire-fly in the wet grass at her feet; but, wherever she is, there is home." Should she pass away there may be a house left, but not a home. The soul of it has gone out of it and left a void that star-

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bles, an emptiness that fills the bereaved heart with a loneliness longing from which there is no escape. It is not home any more. *She* is gone.

Should the father die, bad as that may be, the mother will still be the rallying center for her stricken brood; she will pick up the wrecks of her broken home, gather her children about her "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings," and manage in spite of death to get along somehow. As only a woman can she will manage without her little ones knowing or sharing her heart-aches and privations, to make for them a home—one green little spot in the desert—where love shall brood over them and, like the wings of God, keep them from the evil. "As a mother comforteth her children, so will I comfort you, saith the Lord," is the Divine recognition of Itself in the heart of a woman.

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As God is heaven, woman is home. There is no heaven without Him, and there is no home without her. Gentle, and strongest when gentlest, self-sacrificing and patient, mindful of sweetest courtesies, expectant ever as her only reward of the caress of him she loves, or of the velvet hands of those who call her mother, she lives, and can only truly live, in a world of love. She, and not the Pope, is God's vicar on earth, for, as Carlyle says with largest meaning, "God made Mothers, and shall not all be well?" The Mother is the visible revelation of the Mother-Heart of God, which quality in Him is the secret of the love and beauty of the universe. Has not Wordsworth, the poet of Nature, drawn with insight as true as that spiritual perception we feel in the lines on *Tintern Abbey*, the real woman, who is always half angel, half human?

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She was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight!
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament!
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn!
A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay!

I saw her, upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance, in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet!
A Creature not too bright, or good,
For human nature's daily food!
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles!

And now I see, with eyes serene,
The very pulse of the machine!
A Being breathing thoughtful breath!
A Traveler betwixt life and death!
The reason firm, the temperate will,

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Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort, and command:
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light!

Such is the woman whom men reverence from afar and love when near, the mother of men.

One's opinion of mankind is largely determined by the kind of mankind he lives with. Bernard Shaw insists that women lack intellect, which opinion does discredit to his Celtic blood and to the 6,500 useful patents issued to women. Tolstoi thinks they lack spirituality. Schopenhauer, Heine, and Balzac think they are idealized and are not what men imagine them to be.

Now, there is nothing gained by quarreling with the fancies of novelists, dramatists, or literary decadents who misinterpret this world or create one of their own and people it with all sorts

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of creatures good, bad, and ridiculous. In his "*My Confession*," Tolstoi says, "I felt that I was not quite mentally sound"—as one might perhaps judge from his "*Kreutzer Sonata*." Balzac never painted the portrait of a good woman. Schopenhauer looked at creation through smoked glasses, and poor Heine felt differently about women when rising from his "mattress grave" in the Rue d'Amsterdam, in Paris, when for the last time he sought the consolations of the Ideal in the Venus of the Louvre. "With difficulty," says he, "I dragged myself to the Louvre, and I almost sank down as I entered the magnificent hall where the ever-blessed goddess of beauty, our beloved Lady of Milo, stands on her pedestal. At her feet I lay long, and wept so bitterly that a stone must have pitied me. The goddess looked compassionately on me, but at the same time disconsolately, as if she

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would say, 'Dost thou not see, then, that I have no arms, and thus can not help thee?' " Women there may be who have more of the sub-human than the super-human in their cosmos, just as there are men who, according to Webster's definition of "Model," may be nothing more than "an imitation of something existing," but real men know real women, and, after all, it is only the real that counts.

Of course, we can hardly be expected to fall in love with such feminine types as Mrs. Gummidge, "that poor lorn creetur" to whom "everything goes contrairy;" Mrs. Jellaby, "who devotes herself to the public" and who is "hoping by this time next year to have from a hundred and fifty to two hundred healthy families cultivating coffee and educating the natives of Borrioboola-Gha, on the left bank of the Niger;" Miss Miggs of sharp and acid visage—

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Miss Miggs who, "as a general principle and abstract proposition, held the male sex to be utterly contemptible and unworthy of notice; to be fickle, false, base, sottish, inclined to perjury and wholly undeserving." We can not, absolutely, worship such worthy women. Not even Mrs. Lupin, the good-looking, comfortable Mistress of the Blue Dragon—a fitting contrast to Balzac's Madame Valquer, sitting, like a huge brown spider in its dusty cobweb, at the door of her Parisian den full of odors and mystery.

Nor will any but decadents reverence as Sistine Madonnas those poor creatures, mere simulacræ of women, found in the pages of a Herrick, a Zola, or a D'Annunzio, those diabolically sweet-toned, perfumed enchantresses who "weave the winding sheet of souls and lay them in the urn of everlasting death," neurasthenic victims of ennui; silly, vain

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women, seekers of the other sex, deserters of home but frequenters of the ballroom; affectionate toward dogs but indifferent to children, alluring in dress but strangers to taste. Such creatures, pitiable rather than condemnable, of whom we may read in the yellows and purples of erotic fiction or, perchance, may see flitting like moths around an arc-light in the glitter of artificial society, are not *real* women, they are not the women who build the homes of a stalwart nation, women who inspire real men to noble living and magnificent deeds.

The true woman finds her deepest joy not in the glare of the lime-light, but in the gladness of her home; not in the seductive smiles of a burnt-out *blasé* habitue of the ballroom, but in the love of her husband and the happiness of her children. The path from her door does not lead to the Divorce Court, but the

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Courts of Heaven. In her home, where she is Queen of heart and hearth, there is nothing to hide. No secret shame gnaws at the roots of her life, like the serpent in Scandinavian Saga, eating away the roots of Ygdrasil. No tumultuous unrest, or wild longing for the intoxicating excitement of the crowd singing uproariously down the Calamitous Way, or swept in the whirl of frenzied pleasure, disturbs her unruffled peace. She is sane. She sails through life's seas on an even keel. The home may be humble and constant toil be needed for its support, yet repose is there; satisfaction is there; honor is there; love is there; radiant, comforting, glorifying, lifting even the earthy and common-place into the ideal and the heavenly. There, where she is more than Vestal Virgin guarding the sacred fire in Rome's most virile days, the ancient pieties are revered, the finer en-

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thusiasms for the best and bravest are
bred into the blood and tissue of her off-
spring.

Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
Her husband also, and he praiseth her, saying,
Many daughters have done worthily,
But thou excellest them all.
Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain;
But a woman that feareth
Jehovah, she shall be praised.

How beautifully Tennyson in the
"Princess" rises up and blesses his
Mother.

"I love her, one
Not learned, save in gracious household ways;
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants;
No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise.
Interpreter between the gods and men,
Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
On tipetoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male minds per-
force

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Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,
And girdled her with music. Happy he
With such a mother! faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things
 high
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
He shall not bind his soul with clay."

Among the hidden beauties of this story of love is the eager yearning of Rachel to fill to the brim Jacob's cup of joy. Not all women are perfect, lacking nothing to the satisfying of ideals of beauty and culture and the desires of the heart. Not to all women comes "that motherhood which was God's primal plan," although, as Ella Wheeler Wilcox sings,

All womenkind He meant to share its glories,
 He meant us all to nurse our babes to rest;
To croon them songs, and tell them sleepy
 stories,
Else why the wonder of a woman's breast?

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It is one of those lovely tricks that nature some time plays, for where there is no imperfection there is no dependence. Though Rachel was "beautiful and well favored," she had her limitations. But this made no difference to Jacob. He loved *her*. He loved her all the more for that she needed his love all the more to make up for what was lacking to complete her happiness and his. Love sees no defects. If such exist, they are artistic fictions, just as we talk of legal fictions, or, they are mere flaws in a diamond, happy blemishes whose quality of imperfection is transformed into positive beauty by their heightening the effect of the virtues and graces of the beloved. The soul of genius which shone through the frail body of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the sweetest songstress in all the sky, appealed all the more strongly to her robust lover, the virile, masterful Browning, who won her and

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carried her away to health and happiness in sunny Italy. And how that love glorified her limitations!

First time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write;
And ever since, it grew more clean and
white.

Slow to world-greetings, quick with its "Oh,
list"

When the angels speak.

—*Sonnets from the Portuguese.*

Thus it is where there are real men and women, and real love between them. There may be men who by reason of over-culture or some other fatality are able to see nothing but limitations; certain cold intellectuals, perhaps, who see at once every microscopic flaw, and because of this remain lonely strangers to all the warmth of woman's love, and all that it means to hear from one's own child the sweet words, "My father!"

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Herbert Spencer tells us that George Eliot was the most admirable woman, mentally, he ever met. The "greatness of her intellect conjoined with her womanly qualities and manner" kept him by her side. They met and took walks together in the terrace at Somerset House, "at that time as little invaded by visitors as by sounds." People drew their inferences. "There were reports that I was in love with her, and that we were about to be married. But neither of these reports was true."

Of course not. The author of the *Synthetic Philosophy*, one of the greatest philosophic minds of this or of any age, was so fastidious and, as he himself confesses, "so prone to look for faults alike in the performances of others and in my own" that his mind became too keenly analytical for love to play any part in his cold life's history. Herbert Spencer admired George Eliot and is

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generous in his tribute to her wonderful abilities and beautiful self-depreciation, but he can not help telling us that "her head was larger than is usual in women. It had, moreover, a peculiarity distinguishing it from most heads, whether feminine or masculine; namely, that its contour was very regular. Usually heads have here and there either flat places or slight hollows; but her head was everywhere convex." How did she think of *him*? for he was by no means striking or handsome.

"My brightest spot," she writes, "next to my love for old friends, is the deliciously calm *new* friendship that Herbert Spencer gives me. We see each other every day, and have a delightful *camaradie* in everything. But for him my life would be desolate enough. What a wretched lot of old shriveled creatures we shall be by and by! Never mind, the uglier we get in the eyes of

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others the lovelier we shall be to each other."

The straight line is the beautiful line in Ethics, but the curved line is the beautiful line in Art, and so to the eyes of love there are no flats and hollows. They are all curves. Browning saw no limitations in his Elizabeth. They were there, for she was not beautiful. But he saw *her*, the pure, sweet spirit which looked up to him and leaned upon him for that love which was her life.

Some time ago the world hung its head in shame for a man, who having become immensely rich and wishing, as the newspapers said, to shine in a society to which he did not belong by birth or education, discarded the wife of his youth. Through many years of poverty and hardship, working in the kitchen and at the washtub, she had helped him to climb into prominence by sacrificing herself. Now, faded and worn, and

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possessing none of those accomplishments necessary to cultured society, she is to be thrust aside! It would be difficult to imagine keener agony or more benumbing grief than that of the broken-hearted woman who sat that night watching the hands of the clock slowly turn to the hour of twelve, when he, forsaking her, took to himself another wife, and *she*, divorced, discarded, thrown aside like an old dish-rag, passed out of his life—once hers—forever! But if the world hung its head in shame for this wrong, it stood up straighter and grew an inch taller when it knew that a President of the United States would steal away from the Cabinet of a great nation or from the representatives of kings and emperors to minister to the slightest wish of the frail woman in an adjoining room, who called him “William.” The greater the need the greater the love.

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The crowning worth of this story, however, is the lesson it has been telling ever since of the heartening power of love. There is no inspiration like the afflatus of love. Nothing so quickly transfigures human life. In his "*Buch der Lieder*" Heine suggests to us a poor poet, misshapen, broken and spent until the ideal of his love draws nigh, when he is at once transformed into strength and beauty. Nothing so strengthens courage, nothing so toughens endurance. "Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed unto him but a *few days* for the love he had for her." Therein is the beauty and the glory of service. It is not measured by time.

O Love is weak
Which counts the answers and the gains,
Weighs all the losses and the pains,
And eagerly each fond word drains
A joy to seek.

.

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It hardly asks
If it be loved at all; to take
So barren seems, when it can make
Such bliss, for the beloved's sake,
Of bitter tasks.

Jacob's slavery to Laban was to him the largest freedom, as service to God is the gladdest liberty. Jacob had some one to work for, some one to come home to when the day's work was done. From early morning till the slanting of the sun he led the flocks of Laban to pasture, watched over them, fought their enemies, rescued the lost; but to him all this hardship was sweet, for there was a great motive in his heart; the joy of showing his heart's desire how he loved her. Labor is not drudgery any more. Filled with a great love which glorifies him, life has worth and meaning never felt before; and the life that had been without purpose took on dignity and character which nerved him

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later for the struggle in the darkness with the Unknown at the fords of Jordan.

In traveling about Italy or France or Germany one picks up many a charming story and quaint legend of the old cathedrals, such as the Cathedral at Treves, at Bruges, at Cologne, the old shrine at Antwerp, or the Church of St. Maria Maggiore on the Esquilline in Rome, which, according to the legend, was built by order of the Virgin, who appeared to Pope Liberius and a rich patrician in a dream and commanded that they should build a church on the spot where on the following day (August 5th) they should find newly-fallen snow. But I think the most delightful story of all is that which gathers around the Cathedral at Tronjheim, Norway: "When the building had been covered in, an aged artist came and asked to be allowed to carve one of the

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blocks left for that purpose. Because of his years his request was declined, but he begged so hard, and he was an artist, that eventually the chief architect allotted him a block in a remote corner of the roof, where, in that high latitude, the sun can only strike upon it during six weeks in the midst of summer. In those weeks, however, artists from many lands may be seen copying the work he wrought. Thankfully the old man accepted his task, climbed slowly up to his scaffold each morning, and retired early each afternoon. One day he did not come down as usual, and was found to be dead, with open eyes fixed on a face he had chiseled in the stone. It was the face of a woman, a woman he had loved in early life. She had loved him, but death had snatched her away, and he had cherished the fond image all these years. He knew himself to be a dying man, he knew also that his art

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would be buried with him in the grave; he was therefore resolved that the last work of his hand should be to carve the features of the woman so dear to his heart in speaking stone. When the attention of the chief architect had been called to the circumstance he gathered the other artists around him and said: 'Gentlemen, do you see that face? That is the finest piece of work in this cathedral, and it is the work of love.' "

From all this we learn that at the heart of Life is motive. As the motive is, Life is. All great lives are the products of great motive. This was the secret of Him "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). It was the secret of Gladstone. On his first visit to Rome, when he beheld St. Peter's there came into his heart a deep longing for the re-union of

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Christendom. "The figure of the Church rose before me as a teacher. I contemplated secular affairs," he says, "chiefly as a means of being useful in Church affairs." "And from the day that he had his dream of a Universal Visible Church," says Mr. Morley, amid "the sublime and somber anarchy of history he beheld the Church leading the world." "This is the enigma, and this is the solution in faith, and spirit, in which Gladstone lived and moved. In him it gave energies of life their meaning, and to duty its foundation." It was the secret of St. Paul, "This one thing I do," of Göthe, of Bismarck, of Disraeli, of Livingstone, of Agassiz, and Darwin, and of every one, known or unknown, who has lived the life worth living. The lack of motive—ennobling motive—lies at the heart of the wrecked lives, the human derelicts which make up the flotsam and jetsam of humanity.

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“Whatever lacks Purpose is evil ; a pool without pebbles breeds slime.
Not any one step hath Chance fashioned on the infinite stairway of time.
Not ever came Good without labor, in Toil or in Science or Art,
It must be wrought out through the muscles, born out of the soul and the heart.”

What the listless millions, weary of life, need more than anything else is the power of a new inspiration. Grandeur, wealth, vast combinations of industry and commerce, freedom of thought, universal education in material things, have not brought that happiness, that sweet contentment to the millionaire and the wage-earner that economists and sociologists have promised us from the housetops. These are not your gods, O Israel! Bring back Imagination, bring back the hunger for the Beautiful in conduct, thought, and speech! Put an entrancing ideal into the soul of a

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man, an angel dream in his brain, something, anything, that will illuminate his inner being and light up the world in which he labors; then will he be happier than kings and hardest toil will be sweetest joy.

He whose life is centered in his home, who carries in his heart as he goes to his work the face of his Rachel and the laughter of his children will understand, as can not otherwise be understood, the fullness and the glory of the words, "And they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had for her."

EPILOGUE.

"And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem."

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“Since she went—home—

The saddened world has never seemed so
bright;

There is less splendor in the morning's light
And duller now the radiant moonbeams
shine.

All nature's joys come now to slower birth,
And thou hast lost, O tender morning earth,
The glory that was thine!

“Since she went—home—

The dragging days seem now so drear and
long;

A hint of sadness chills the gayest song,
A plaintive tone in every sound I hear.
Even the sunlight's rays of purest gold,
Like all the world, seem something dull
and cold,
Missing her presence dear.

“Since she went—home—

So large a world to lose so very much,
In one small woman's face and voice and
touch,

The simple magic of her tender smile!
So full a world to have so empty grown
For one small woman's quiet soul and tone,
And yet—'t will empty be for such a
while

Since she went—home!”

—*Ethel Maude Colson.*

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And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls, playing in the streets thereof.—*Zech. 8: 5.*

LOVE is the deepest passion. It is the divinest quality. Soaring, singing, rejoicing, it is forever young, forever renewing itself out of the boundless seas of Infinite Love flowing from the essence of God. It is the reason for Creation. It is the impelling cause of Redemption. Creation begins with its music, and Redemption closes with its triumph. Like the warmth of suns it permeates all worlds. Even where there is no life it gambols and disports itself in infinite variety of form and lines of Beauty. Love is everywhere, for God is everywhere, and God is love.

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But nowhere does this supreme quality manifest itself so strongly, so beautifully tender, gentle and sweet, as in the heart of a mother, whether that mother be a brooding dove or a fresh young wife bending in ecstasy of wonder and delight over her first-born child. There, in the soul of the mother, God reveals Himself as He did between Angels' Wings on the Mercy Seat, for there is a light and a depth of glory not seen elsewhere on earth or sea or sky. It is remarkable how often He appeals to that Mother-love, which in a measure we understand, to teach us the Love "that passeth knowledge." The only time God sings in the Bible is where in Zephaniah 3: 17, He assumes the character of a mother who presses her baby to her bosom and croons and sings over it with gladness and joy. Father's love is strong, lacking perhaps the exquisite fineness, the subtle poetry of love, but it

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is deep like the ocean, self-sacrificing to the uttermost, as is mother's love; and so, there is no love like parental love, ever revealing itself, offering itself, exerting itself, and finding its own unspeakable reward in smiling at its own reflection in the hearts of its loved ones.

But what when this love is stricken, when it bends with fathomless grief over an empty crib! "Rachel is mourning for her children and will not be comforted, because they are not." Yesterday the world was filled with music. Life was full to the brim. The voice of the little one and the patter of his feet made melody in the home. Where he was the atmosphere breathed love and all the sweet intimacies and mysteries of the Love-Life. Now, the whole world is changed. The green trees waving their branches to the passing clouds, the gentle bravery of color on the hillsides, the querulous monologue of the brook

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rippling over the stones where *he* played, the singing of birds, or the whispering of the winds in the treetops,—these have no meaning any more, the whole wide pitiless sweep of Creation is nothing but a cruel, meaningless Blank, and we wonder how anything can sing in a Universe like this! The light of the parents' eyes, the living embodiment of their mutual love is nothing now but a "white silence." Love hovers over the cold, unresponsive form which no kiss will ever waken; memory recalls every print of his fingers on the window-pane, every print of his shoe in the garden, his walk, his merry laugh, his soft touch, his eyes full of mirth and mischief, and all the pretty ways of him, now gone, leaving only an abyssmal void, a boundless yearning for one more embrace of the little one that Love in its grief will not surrender.

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I wonder so that mothers ever fret
At little children clinging to their gown,
Or that the footprints when the days are wet
Are ever black enough to make them frown.
If I could find a little muddy boot,
Or cap, or jacket, on my chamber floor;
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
And hear its patter in my home once more;

If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
To-morrow make a kite to reach the sky—
There is no woman in God's world could say
She was more blissfully content than I.
But, ah! the dainty pillow next my own
Is never rumpled by a shining head;
My singing birdling from its nest has flown,
The little boy I used to kiss is dead!

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

It was a long time ago, perhaps, since he went away—but the scar remains of the deep wound made that day. Not one of his little garments has been destroyed; they are upstairs, folded away in a safe place all these years, and his playthings are there too—always going

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to be done away with or disposed of in some way, but never yet has the day come. They stay as memory stays.

The little toy dog is covered with dust,
But sturdy and stanch he stands;
And the little toy soldier is red with rust,
And his musket molds in his hands.
Time was when the little toy dog was new,
And the soldier was passing fair;
And that was the time when our Little Boy
Blue

Kissed them and put them there.

"Now, do n't you go till I come," he said,
"And do n't you make any noise!"
So, toddling off to his trundle bed,
He dreamt of the pretty toys;
And as he was dreaming an angel song
Awakened our Little Boy Blue—
Oh! the years are many, the years are long,
But the little toy friends are true.

Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in the same old place,
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face;

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And they wonder, as waiting the long years
through

In the dust of that little chair,
What has become of our Little Boy Blue
Since he kissed them and put them there.

—*Eugene Field.*

At such times, crucial days in one's life, there is apt to arise within us a feeling of resentment against God and the whole order of things. We enter the cloud. We sink into brooding and mystery, into doubt and unfaith. Does God know? Why did He permit it? Of what value was prayer? Does my little child live, and where is he, and what is he doing? Has he forgotten me? And imagination wanders into the Unseen. All too well do we understand the heart of the great London minister Dr. Joseph Parker longing for a glimpse of the little one gone!

“Amid all the whirl and dizziness of life's tragedy, in which creation seems

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to be but one great cloud, I find myself suddenly brought to a sweet baby's grave. A gray old church, a gurgling stream, a far-spreading thorn tree on a green hillock, and a grave on the sunny southerly side. That is it. Thither I hasten night and day, and in patting the soft grass I feel as if conveying some sense of love to the little sleeper far down. Do not reason with me about it; let the wild heart, in its sweet delirium of love, have all its own way.

"Baby was but two years old when, like a dewdrop, he went up to the warm sun, yet he left my heart as I have seen ground left out of which a storm had torn a great tree. We talk about the influence of great thinkers, great speakers, and great writers; but what about the little infant's power? Oh, child of my heart, no poet has been so poetical, no soldier so victorious, no benefactor so kind, as thy tiny, unconscious self. I

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feel thy soft kiss on my withered lips just now, and would give all I have for one look of thy dreamy eyes. But I can not have it.

“Yet God is love. Not dark doubt, not staggering argument, not subtle sophism, but child-death, especially where there is but one, makes me wonder and makes me cry in pain. Baby! baby! I could begin the world again without a loaf or a friend if I had but thee; such a beginning, with all its hardships, would be welcome misery. I do not wonder that the grass is green and soft that covers that little grave, and that the summer birds sing their tenderest notes as they sit on the branches of that old hawthorn tree.

“My God! Father of mine, in the blue heaven, is not this the heaviest cross that can crush the weakness of man? Yet that green grave, not three feet long, is to me a great estate, making me

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rich, with wealth untold. I can pray there. There I meet the infant angels; there I see all the mothers whose spirits are above; and there my heart says strange things in strange words—Baby, I am coming, coming soon! Do you know me? Do you see me? Do you look from sunny places down to this cold land of weariness? Oh, baby; sweet, sweet baby, I will try for your sake to be a better man; I will be kind to other little babies and tell them your name, and sometimes let them play with your toys; but, Oh, baby, baby, my old heart sobs and breaks!”

Now, Religion has no conflict with tears. This would be a poor world were there no pain in it. It is sometimes better to go to a funeral than to a banquet. There we touch Realities; at the festal board we may be playing with Illusions. Through tears we see deeper into the meaning of things about us, and farther

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into the mysteries of the heavens above us. Against Nature Religion wages no war. The natural and the spiritual are two halves of the universal whole. Any view of life which does not include both is neither.

To mourn for our departed dead is not distrust of God. Jesus wept. And what a beautiful, though pathetic picture is that incidentally sketched in the Acts of the Apostles, of Paul's farewell of his friends at Ephesus: "And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more."

Paganism, old or new, may steel itself against the sorrows of life, thinking that they are of no concern to an indifferent God. But Stoicism is at war with Nature and becomes callous to hu-

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manity, for that philosophy which looks with indifference on the evils of life will not disturb its unruffled calm with laborious efforts to relieve them. Religion presents to us the Man of Sorrows as the Ideal, and it is He, who is the true image of God, that reveals to us not the indifferent God—the God who does not care, but the loving Father who careth for us.

And let us here think for a moment. If you had only one supreme wish for your child and you could obtain that without fail, what would it be? Would it be wealth? Riches take to themselves wings and fly away. Would it be honor and place and power? These are but for a day, and are often but sources of trouble within and envyings and bickerings without—degrading to noble spirits. No. It is only when the earth is ours for the asking that we see how little it is. Every parent looking back

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over the road he has come would cry out: "After life's struggle give to my child eternal rest in Heaven. Give him immortal youth, number him with Thy Redeemed, the white-robed sons of God in the Land of the Unclouded Day." Well, if this is the hunger of us for our children's final welfare, should we weary the stars with our lamentations because God has given the child at the *beginning* of life what we wish for him at the *end* of his life?

But Oh, the finality of it! This dreadful sense of loss, ever present, ever tugging at the soul, how can one ever be reconciled to it all! True, deeply true, because it is the revolt of Nature which shall some day itself be delivered from the bondage of corruption. It is Love crying out against Death. And we are not to be reconciled to Death. It is against Nature that we should be. And "the last enemy that shall be de-

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stroyed is Death." But to be reconciled to the purpose of God is quite another thing. Nevertheless, Heaven has made even Death to serve holy uses. The two great civilizers are Love and Grief. Love inspires, energizes, glorifies. Sorrow softens and refines. Love keeps the world young. Sorrow makes the whole world kin. The garden of Gethsemane leads to Mount Calvary, but over against Calvary is Mount Olivet and the Ascension path to the throne of God. And, after all, the going is not final, and the time may come when we shall be glad for that going.

I once knew a mother who for long length of days mourned in secret for her little darling, a beautiful boy of five, and could not become reconciled to her loss, though she tried hard to think that it was all for the best. Many a time, long after he had gone, as she went about her duties in the home, did the

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silent tear course down her cheek, and when spoken to would say, "I wonder what he is doing to-day?" We all remember when heart-broken Enoch Arden went back to his wretched hut to die, carrying his secret with him, how he fell back on the happy thought that the little one of the long ago would meet him at the gate of heaven.

"And now there is but one of all my blood
Who will embrace me in the world to be.
This hair is his; she cut it off and gave it,
And I have borne it all these years,
And thought to bear it with me to my grave,
But now my mind is changed, for I shall see
 him,
My babe, in bliss."

And so the time came, many years later, when this dear mother, going out herself into the Unseen, turned back for a moment from the Shadows and with a smile said, "I am so glad he went; he will meet me there, and we will be together forever!"

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But, after all, is it not true that much of our immoderate grief springs from our doubt of the Reality of God? Or, perhaps we think of God as foreign to us, and the Unseen as something to be dreaded. The Immensities appall us. We shrink into our quivering selves, feeling no oneness with the glorious Universe around us. We are strangers to it, as all our fathers were, and when Death robs us of our loved ones we think of them as lost, swallowed up in the infinite Nothing. And yet it is different if we think of God as not out there among far-away stars, where nobody lives, but as down here where we live; as not being so much out there in the illimitable spaces where there are no bleeding hearts and grass-grown mounds where loved ones lie, as He is down here with us in our homes, in our joys and griefs and foolish stumblings.

God is as much interested in our chil-

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dren as we are, and where they are, and what they are doing. There is no Here and There to him. It is all one. The whole is our Father's House. In that House there are many mansions, resting-places for growth and fitness, homes for spiritual nursing, homes for the worn and weary.

And it is all one with those who go—only it is higher and more real and beautiful. So they are not lost, they are not absorbed in infinite emptiness. The soul there finds itself, realizes its own true self, and does not forget, and does not cease to love the dear faces wet with tears in yonder Earth-star. They know themselves as the children of this and that other sorrowful home, and the memory of it all, of father and mother, of brothers and sisters, of sunny days, of loving caresses and sweet nothings—or of hard toil and patient sacrifice, of poverty and hardship—stays. For,

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were there no memory there would be no knowledge of one's self, and if no sense of identity, then no knowledge of life, or of death—nothing but a blank without a beginning, and all of God's providences from the cradle to the grave would be lost for the furnishing of the soul.

The Good Shepherd careth for His sheep and carries the lambs in His bosom. "They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Beyond the empty crib we may see the open door of heaven and "boys and girls playing in the streets thereof;" for—

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“Oh! what do you think the angels say?”

Said the children up in heaven;

“There’s a dear little girl coming home to-day;

She’s almost ready to fly away

From the earth we used to live in;

Let’s go and open the gates of pearl,

Open them wide for the new little girl,”

Said the children up in heaven.

“God wanted her here, where His little ones meet,”

Said the children up in heaven;

“She shall play with us in the golden street;

She has grown too fair, she has grown too sweet

For the earth we used to live in;

She needed the sunshine, this dear little girl

That gilds this side of the gates of pearl,”

Said the children up in heaven.

“So the King called down from the angels’ dome,”

Said the children up in heaven;

“‘My little darling, arise and come

To the place prepared in the Father’s home,

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The home My children live in!
Let's go and watch the gates of pearl,
Ready to welcome the new little girl,"
Said the children up in heaven.

"Far down on the earth, do you hear them
weep?"

Said the children up in heaven;
"For the dear little girl has gone asleep!
The shadows fall and the night clouds sweep
O'er the earth we used to live in;
But we'll go and open the gates of pearl!
Oh! why do they weep for their dear little
girl?"

Said the children up in heaven.

"Fly with her quickly, Oh angels dear!"

Said the children up in heaven;

"See — she is coming! Look there! Look
there!

At the jasper light on her sunny hair,
Where the veiling clouds are riven!"

Ah! hush, hush, hush! all the swift wings furl!
For the King Himself, at the gates of pearl,
Is taking her hand, dear, tired little girl,
And is leading her into heaven.

THE LONGING FOR HOME

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I long to depart—to pull up anchor and sail away—and be with Christ, which is far better.—*Ep. to the Philippians 1: 23.*

PAUL is lonely. A prisoner on the Palatine Hill in Rome, he has had rough experiences lately—thrilling days and nights of preaching and prayer in the soldiers' barracks amid the comings and goings of guards and sentinels, the rattle of clanging shields and spears and breastplates thrown here or there, coarse jokes, soldier-talk and reminiscences of exploits in far-away battlefields by the Nile, the Euphrates, or the Danube, and it has all wearied him. But he has a little respite now, and with it comes a sagging of the spirit. He sits there at the door of the barracks overlooking the Circus Maximus weary and alone. The

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jostling crowds beneath him in the Circus, with its vast expanse of seats rising tier above tier, its glorious columns, the glistening marbles of its temples, the lights and shadows on the Aventine Hill beyond, have no attractions for him. He looks upon it all, but sees nothing. His thoughts are in far-off Philippi, solacing himself with memories of friends in the little Christian community there. Soon, these vagrant longings wander away, as his loneliness deepens, to the truest friend of all, who is in Heaven, and then the sweeter side of the Apostle quietly comes to the fore, crowding out the ugly dreams that had worried him. Like a smiling violet beside a snowdrift, all that is beautiful and lovable in his virile yet sensitive soul gently reveals itself in this wonderfully tender, delightfully courteous letter to his Philippian friends.

Why Paul is heavy-hearted and why

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he longs so for the strengthening touch of friendship is made clear at the beginning of his Epistle. He had great times with the stalwart soldiers of the Prætorian Guard—some of whom, perhaps, were yesterday bodyguard to Nero—and to these bronzed empire-builders he, too, soldier-like, had spoken high thoughts of the Empire of the Spirit—of kingdoms and empires they had never dreamed of. But after that he had a bad hour meditating on another sort of people, certain babblers who had tried to depreciate him by minimizing him, disputing his doctrine, and making him, if possible, a perverter of truth; not directly to be sure, which would fail; not openly, but by whispered suggestion, question, and innuendo. Experts these, fine experts in the gentle art of moral assassination, to worry a man like Paul! But, the nobler the character the keener it suffers.

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No wonder the Apostle is weary of the strife. His thoughts are world-wide, but the littleness of things about him, the seemingly hopeless task of realizing his dreams at the heart of the Empire, his imprisonment, and his doubtful future weigh upon him. Indeed, as he sits there in his loneliness, thinking of his hardships and conflicts; of all that yet remains to be done in the Churches and the world outside; of the fathomless joy and blessedness of the Unseen, of the infinite possibilities of life there and fellowship with Jesus, a divine homesickness steals over him. He would, as of old, answer the trumpet-call to duty, but he longs for rest, as men of God have often prayed, and in a moment of despondency he cries, "I long to pull up anchor and sail away to the Christ which is far better!"

Brave soul, he has a tender side to him! He has often been the victim of

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mobs, and in many thrilling experiences on land and sea has frightened Death itself, but, after all, the vision of the end, the meeting with the Christ in eternal glory was the hope that lay hid down deep in his heart. To be with Christ was the dream of his life, the power which impelled him, the hope that inspired him.

And so do many cultured souls to-day oftentimes feel. They long to sail away. Not the world, but the littleness of it is too much for them. They hunger for love, for largeness of spirit, and the sweet serenity of peace. All beautiful souls long for quietness and the fellowship of the best. To the push and roar and stampede of the crowd they prefer the quiet woodlands, or the uplands where there is sky and vision and creeping cloud, and where the troublesome voices of the day are hushed in the silences of the stars. What would one

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not give to wander away into the green woods for a whole day with St. Paul, to sit for an hour with Plato, or with Seneca, as he writes his letters, or with Augustine, brooding over his "City of God," or to listen to the words of Jesus in the home at Bethany? Wonderful days for the soul when we sit and listen, all eyes and ears, to the kings of men, the great thinkers and prophets of humanity, and beholding the worlds of thought and Being expand before us, feel ourselves grow!

It takes a long time to get the world out of us and the universe into us. We are so provincial. Is there not some difference between fowls in a barnyard and eagles in the azure? Some difference between finding one's world in the bottom of a well with three feet of sky above, and tenting among the clouds on mountain tops? The worst heresy is narrowness. There is a divine reason

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why the universe is not smaller. And never till we turn from the little and seek the large, drop the temporal and seize the eternal, can we realize the powers adapted to the eternal and the limitless that are wrapped up within us. The soul is built for the infinite, and in the infinite alone can it find itself. In our best moments we long instinctively for the Heavens and the companionship of the best. Do you not remember the words of Socrates to his friends on the day of his death, as recorded by Plato? At sunset, according to Athenian law, Socrates will drink the deadly hemlock juice, and so, looking forward to his meeting with noble spirits in the other world, he says:

“If, my friends, I did not expect to go to a wise and good God, and to men who have died and are better than those whom I leave here, I should do wrong in not grieving at the prospect of death.

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But now be assured that I hope to go to good men, but this I am not entirely certain of; but that I shall go to God, a Master wholly good, be assured, if I am certain on any subject, I am on this."

Then think of what Cicero says in his treatise on *Old Age* in one of the most splendid passages in all Classical Literature: "O glorious day, when I shall go to that divine assembly and company of spirits, and when I shall depart out of this bustle, this sink of corruption; for I shall go not only to those great men of whom I have before spoken, but also to my dear Cato [his son], than whom there never was a better man, or one more excellent in filial affection, whose funeral rites were performed by me, when the contrary was natural, viz., that mine should be performed by him. His soul is not desiring me, but looking back on me, has de-

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parted into those regions where he saw that I myself must come; and I seem to bear firmly my affliction [viz., the loss of him], not because I do not grieve for it, but I comforted myself thinking that the separation and parting between us would not be for long duration."

Does not this remind us of the writer of Hebrews 12:22, and how the positive affirmations of the New Testament answer the needs of the best in all ages: "But ye are come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born—to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel."

There are those perhaps who really think that it is a superior quality of piety

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to be absorbed in what they call "practical religion" rather than to be ~~medi-~~
~~tating~~ on the blessedness of Heaven. They are not thinking of Heaven, its holy joys, its fellowships with kingly souls, its glad meetings with loved ones gone, its splendors and glory beyond compare. They are not thinking even between times of these things. They tell us in finely balanced phrase that he serves God best who serves man best; that the cry of the human in festering slums of crowded cities should fill our ears rather than the songs of the redeemed; that to right wrongs here is better than rejoicing over triumphs there. And, indeed, they may not be wholly wrong, though they seem to be taking sides with Martha chiding Mary. Christianity is not a sentimental dream. It is not a religion of silks and perfumes; of ecstatic rapture over soaring music and glorious cathedrals, those an-

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gelic dreams chiseled in stone, nor of spiritual aloofness, or of sighing over the waywardness of the world. Christianity is spiritual virility. It is heroic. In it is the rich red blood of endeavor, the fine stroke of conquest over principalities and powers, earthly and unearthly, which war against men's souls. Oh, we need n't think that Christianity is an anæmic something adapted to women, cowled monks, and lovers of fine art. The great crowd of heroes, champions of truth and freedom, and all of worth we enjoy to-day, smile at us from Roman amphitheaters and martyrs' stakes, and dungeons and battlefields, and turn away from us, when we think so, to others of larger brow.

Certainly, there is much work to do in this every-day world of ours. But, may not one both work and pray? serve and listen too? Is he not, in truth, the best helper who does both? William

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Canton in his legends of the olden time tells this beautiful story:

“In the ancient days of faith the doors of the churches used to be opened with the first glimmer of the dawn in summer, and long before the moon had set in winter; and many a ditcher and woodcutter and ploughman on his way to work used to enter and say a short prayer before beginning the labor of the long day.

“Now it happened that in Spain there was a farm laborer named Isidore, who went daily to his early prayer, whatever the weather might be. His fellow workmen were slothful and careless, and they gibed and jeered at his piety; but when they found that their mockery had no effect upon him, they spoke spitefully of him in the hearing of the master, and accused him of wasting in prayer the time which he should have given to his work.

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“When the farmer heard of this he was displeased, and he spoke to Isidore and bid him remember that true and faithful service was better than any prayer that could be uttered in words.

“‘Master,’ replied Isidore, ‘what you say is true, but it is also true that no time is ever lost in prayer. Those who pray have God to work with them, and the ploughshare which He guides draws as goodly and fruitful a furrow as another.’

“This the master could not deny, but he resolved to keep a watch on Isidore’s comings and goings, and early on the morrow he went to the fields.

“In the sharp air of the autumn morning he saw this one and that one of the men sullenly following the plough behind the oxen, and taking little joy in the work. Then, as he passed on to the rising ground, he heard a lark caroling gayly in the gray sky, and in the hun-

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dred acre which Isidore was engaged he saw to his amazement not one plough but three turning the hoary stubble into ruddy furrows.

“And one plough was drawn by oxen and guided by Isidore, but the two others were drawn and guided by angels of heaven.

“When next the master spoke to Isidore it was not to reproach him, but to beg that he might be remembered in his prayers.”

It is a stern truth which we do well to grasp in its significance if we can, that, whether we mean to or not, we put *ourselves* into our work, of *whatever* kind it is. Of whatever quality, texture, or spirit *we are, that* will our work be. Carlyle somewhere says, “A false man can not build a straight wall.” Nor can he. Give him time enough and wall enough, and he will build himself into the wall. The noblest and the most

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beautiful things of life in architecture, and painting, and sculpture, and literature, and also in the deeds and philanthropies of men, are just those things into which the Divine idea has entered through the spirit of the doer. Did Paul's dreaming of heaven impart no tenderness, no sweet courtesy to the tone of this Epistle?

The holiest men who have ever lived have worked in one world and lived in the other. Did not St. Anthony of Padua defend the workingmen and traders against the rapacity of the bishops and the cruelty of the nobles? The saint sighing for heaven to-day is a martyr for liberty to-morrow. Telemachus, the recluse, flung himself between the swords of the gladiators in the arena and by his death put an end to such combats everywhere. "Play the man, Brother Ridley!" cried Latimer at the stake to his fellow martyr. "By God's

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help we will light a candle to-day in England that will never be put out!"

The three greatest names, perhaps, of our day in New Testament scholarship in the English-speaking world were Lightfoot, Westcott, and Hort. Was there ever a finer combination of the practical and the mystical than is found in the character of the saintly Westcott, the great Bishop of Durham? He was engaged with Dr. Hort on a revision of the Greek Text of the New Testament, writing great commentaries on St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews, pouring out the wealth of his scholarship on the Revised Version of the English Bible, and yet in addition to all this he flung himself with ardor into the social questions of the hour. We see him conferring with leaders of Labor Unions, managing the movement for eight hours' work, presiding at a Christian Social Union, applying all his energies in the

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settlement of the Coal-miners' Strike, in which was involved the interests of thousands of poor homes. With all the heat of an honest man he could and did rebuke the vices and wrongs of his day.

And yet with all this he was a mystic. He lived in the world of the spirit while doing duty in the world of the flesh. During the day, in the turmoils of social problems; at night, far on till midnight on his knees at the altar of the vast Cathedral lighted only by the moonbeams, wrapt in thought and prayer. As a Cambridge scholar says of him: "He lived in the height. Something of the glory seemed to have descended on him as with rapt face and eyes which saw things hidden from the crowd around, he proclaimed the reality of an unseen world or the coming of the universal restoration. He lived in constant communion with spiritual powers. In the Cathedral or in his own

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Chapel at night the dead seemed very near to him." He lived in the world of the spirit.

And how many pastors in crowded cities fling themselves with matchless devotion into the struggle for the rights of the laborer, for the social betterment of men everywhere, for the practical realization of the Kingdom of God on earth, and yet are as saintly in spirit and life as any mediæval saint whose effigy ever looked down from his niche in a Cathedral, or whose name was ever enshrined in legends of the olden time! Think for a moment of John Richard Green, author of "History of the English People," "Short History of the English People," "The Making of England," etc. The other day I picked up a volume of his *Letters*, edited by Leslie Stephen, and read this of him when he was a pastor in London. The cholera had broken out in his parish.

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“Within an hour from the first seizure in his parish, Green himself met the dying patients in the London Hospital, and thenceforward while the plague lasted, Green, like other clergy in the parishes attacked, worked day and night amidst the panic-stricken people, as officer of health, inspector of nuisances, ambulance superintendent, as well as spiritual consoler and burier of the dead. . . . Green helped to secure the removal of the dead from the houses, and his best helpers were the lowest women of the town.” “It was no uncommon thing to see him going to an infected house between two such outcasts who had volunteered to help him in an errand of mercy. On one occasion he found a man dangerously ill in an upper room. Some big draymen in the street refused to help. Green, therefore, tried to carry the man downstairs. His slight frame was unequal to the effort, and the

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two fell from the top to the bottom of the stairs together. The man, who was in a state of collapse, was not injured." And yet, as Leslie Stephen says, "Green's religious sentiment was deep and permanent. The spiritual life of the mystics, the 'religion of the heart,' which subordinates dogmas and historical matter of fact to the emotions, was entirely congenial to him."

This man Paul, whose task is the redemption of an Empire, the welding of diverse nationalities and tongues into one common brotherhood in Christ Jesus, is no weakling. And who has revealed to us the radiant splendors of the Unseen but the very disciples of him who went about doing good, men, strange to say, with his peace in their hearts but whose lives were spent in everlasting combat with the wrongs of humanity? Man shall not live by bread alone, said Jesus, who lived in two

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worlds. He who goes down the street to plead the cause of a widow in the police-court, to visit some invalid in a back alley, to vote against some social wrong or civic crime, may see above the sky-scrapers and smoke of the town "the City of God coming down from God out of Heaven adorned as a bride for her husband." Above the din of the crowd and the roar of traffic he may hear the sweet far-away chimes in the Eternal City and carry that music with him wherever he goes.

There are in this loud, stunning tide
Of human care and crime
With whom the Melodies abide
Of th' Everlasting Chime!
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their task with busier feet
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

If some bright angel of God should
veil his glory, and coming into our life,

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should put on our clothes and go out into the street to help men everywhere, we should all feel that an extraordinary person had been among us. The heaven within him would be heard in his voice, seen in his eye, felt in his touch and in the benediction of his presence. "Where shall I put the Fra Angelico?" "Dear old Beato," said Violet, "put him opposite the door, that he may give a sensation of peace and beauty to every one who enters the room." So with those who carry the heavens in their heart, and yet long to pull up anchor and sail away. Everywhere men know them among the swarms of mere philanthropists, reformers, and world-menders, with their social programs and Christless cure-alls for universal ills. Forgetting bread and social wrong, men of heart are drawn to them as steel to a magnet, and by them are lifted out of their poor selves into worlds of light

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and moral beauty, thus themselves becoming ministering angels to their broken fellows, which seems to be somehow very practical idealism.

Then let it not be forgotten that the arena of public life is not for all. There is a wonderful variety in life. To some is given to serve in legislative halls or to battle for civic righteousness; to fight fiercely against entrenched iniquity, and in doing so to mingle with the savage elements of lowest society. Others serve in the building of great industries, or in the management of financial interests, while to a few others may be given the thankless task of defending truth.

But not all of us are built for the dust and grime. There are some outside the crowd who can not stand up against the wrangle and controversy of life. The law of the jungle is not for them. But they are not the less useful for all that. For, as George Eliot says in "*Middle-*

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march,” “That things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs.” Life’s coarseness, its vices and tragedies, are too much for many gentle souls to be attracted by it, just as cultured folks, nurtured in fine feeling and courtliness of manner, look with horror on the stockyard behavior of the ruthless and crass. They shrink from the rougher side of life and think of a purer and sweeter life—not necessarily of

—A place where pearly streams
Glide over silver sand,
Like childhood’s rosy, dazzling dreams
Of some far faery land.
—A clime where diamond dew
Glitter on fadeless flowers,
And mirth and music ring aloud
From amaranthine bowers;

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but where the spiritual life is great and clear and "self-continuous as the changeless sea."

Such souls are not pessimists. They are not cynics, despising God's world and its innocent joys which gladden the day, woman's love, and children's laughter. St. Francis Assisi used to call the birds "Our little brothers of the air." But these contemplative souls *know* life, and because they know it in all its moods and tenses is the why they seek a better country—a city which hath foundations of eternal reality, whose Builder and Maker is God. They love to meditate on the bliss awaiting the Sons of the Morning, not because they are unhappy here, but because to them it is given to sing songs of the Celestial City and to dream dreams which shall sweeten the common life, shall put mighty vigor and motive into that life, and wean men from the belittling materialism of the

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daily grind. How enriched is life because of these streams of inspiration which flow down to us from these hills of vision! Think of Faber's

Oh Paradise! Oh Paradise!
The world is growing old.
Who would not be at rest and free
Where love is never cold?

Or of Samuel Rutherford's ecstatic joy
on his death-bed as he mused on Im-
manuel's Land:

The little birds at Anworth, I used to count
them blest;
Now, beside happier altars I go to build my
nest.
O'er these there broods no silence, no graves
around them stand;
For glory, deathless, dwelleth in Immanuel's
Land.

Such melodies of the Life Immortal ex-
press the yearnings of every heart in its
best moods, and in strengthening men

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struggling with life's hard problems. Furnishing heartening ideals, they perform the highest service.

The most beautiful hymn that was ever written, perhaps, is Bernard of Cluny's

Jesus, the very thought of Thee,

which voices the longing of the soul to behold the face of its Lord. But in "O Mother, dear Jerusalem," the unknown saint of the eighth century who wrote it seems to break his heart, as a child for its mother, for a glimpse of his heavenly home:

Thy walls are made of precious stone,
Thy bulwarks diamond square;
Thy gates are all of Orient pearl—
Oh God, if I were there!

And thus in every age great souls have desired to pull up anchor and sail away. They long for the sinless life,

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the stainless robe. It is therefore no wonder that in contrast to the poor earth life with its cloudy mornings and troubled nights, its sin and strivings, St. Bernard of Cluny should sing of the Homeland and set sweet souls singing after him his immortal lines :

For thee, Oh dear, dear country,
Mine eyes their vigil keep ;
For very love beholding
Thy happy name they weep ;
The mention of thy glory
Is unction to the breast,
A medicine in sickness,
And love and life and rest.

Then, as we grow old and the shadows begin to lengthen, what is more natural than that we should think of the Land where the sun never goes down, and of the loved ones who went away in the long ago ! We have not forgotten them. We have carried their image in the soul of our soul through all the

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years, in all lands, and under all skies. We would see them again! There are many things that were left unsaid, many things, perhaps, we would explain. Faith in the good God encourages the conviction that the mother here will not be childless there. She will again clasp her child left motherless here. The loyal lover shall again meet the one he loved on earth and shall walk with her in white on the Hills of God. For, let us not forget that nowhere in all the universe shall we lose our humanity. We leave everything here this side of the curtain except ourselves. Memory survives, love survives, all that God has put into the human heart survives, and no natural hunger of the soul shall remain unsatisfied forever.

“All that we have willed or hoped or dreamed
of good shall exist:

Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor
good, nor power,

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Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives
for the Melodist

Where eternity affirms the conception of
an hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic for
earth too hard,

The passion that left the ground to lose
itself in the sky,

Are music sent up to God by the lover and
the bard;

Enough that *He* heard it once; *we* shall
hear it by-and-by."

If all this should seem to some superior souls a very human conception of heaven, if they are so far removed from what they are pleased to call human weaknesses, the long reach of the soul for its very own, real vision and happy fellowship with all we love for evermore—if all this be a material, sensuous idea of the glories that await us—then let them give us something better, that we may strengthen ourselves with it in the heat and toil of this uncertain life.

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Longing for home is no weakness. It is a means of grace. Thinking of that stainless life we feel the degradation of sin. We know there is no sin there. Nothing that defileth enters those gates of pearl. The saints live there, and we know that if ever we shall live with them there we must be just like them here. And such is the helpfulness of God's grace co-operating with the laws of our nature that we do become like them by thinking of them, and of the King in His beauty, and the Land that is far off. For who can dwell with holy thoughts and not become holy? We grow like that we think the most of. And it seems to us that *it is worth while* to fall asleep betimes at Bethel and see the Heavens open, or to stand beside the holy John at Patmos and hear him say, "I beheld and lo a great multitude which no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, and people,

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and tongues stood before the throne,
and before the Lamb, clothed with
white robes and palms in their hands,
and cried with a loud voice saying, Sal-
vation to our God which sitteth upon the
throne and unto the Lamb. . . . And
they shall hunger no more, nor thirst
any more, neither shall the sun light on
them, nor any heat, for the Lamb
which is in the midst of the throne shall
feed them and shall lead them unto liv-
ing fountains of waters, and God shall
wipe away all tears from their eyes."

A weakness is it to long to depart
and to be with Christ? The poet Sted-
man sings:

Could we but know
The land that ends our dark, uncertain travel,
Where lie those happier hills and meadows
low.
Ah, if beyond the spirit's utmost cavil
Aught of that country could we surely
know—
Who would not go?

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Might we but hear
The hovering angels' high imagined chorus
Or catch, betimes, with wakeful eyes and
clear,
One radiant vista of the realm before us,
With one rapt moment given to see and
hear—
Ah, who would fear?

Were we quite sure
To find the peerless friend who left us lonely,
Or there by some celestial stream as pure
To gaze on eyes that here were love-lit only—
This mortal coil, were we quite sure,
Who would endure?

Well, Paul was quite sure. John was quite sure. And He who came from there and went back there to prepare a place for us, said, "They that do righteousness shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of My Father."

